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University of Alberta

Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled The Experience of Tai Chi Among Older Adult Practitioners: A Phenomenological Study submitted by Maria Christina Tan in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science.

S. Cousins

Dr. Sandra O'Brien Cousins

Dr. Thomas Cameron Wild

Dr. Gordon James Walker

Date: June 25, 2002

Abstract

Tai Chi (TC) is gaining popularity among seniors in North America, yet research on this martial art is focused on risk factor management, leaving health enhancement aspects and reasons for valuing this activity virtually unexplored. This thesis details a phenomenological study exploring motivating factors TC for initiation and continuation, lived experience of TC, and perceived outcomes of TC practise among eight older adult TC practitioners. Seeing TC in action was a compelling factor in initiating TC practise. Enjoyment, perceived health and social benefits, and seeing TC as challenging motivate continued practise. Respondents reported concentrating deeply and experiencing a sensation of detachment during TC practise. They voiced that TC benefits them mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually. Findings regarding the experience of TC among older adult practitioners in the current study appear to link TC practise to Csikszentmihalyi's flow theory.

Acknowledgments

A special thanks goes to all the Tai Chi instructors and practitioners who contributed their time and experiences. Without you, this study could not have come to pass. I would also like to acknowledge the Gyro Club of Edmonton and the University of Alberta Centre for Gerontology, who provided financial support for this study.

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Thank you to my family and friends for listening, empathizing, and helping me to keep things in perspective as I made this journey. To my best friend, Michael: you have been my pillar of support. I appreciate all those hours you spent reading, editing, formatting and cajoling both my brain and my computer into doing what I needed them to do. Thank you, especially, for believing in my work, and for looking after day-to-day life when things seemed too big to handle.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

One in ten Canadians, or 12% of the current population, is over 65 years of age. This proportion is anticipated to increase to 16% over the next 15 years (Active Living Coalition for Older Adults, 1999; National Advisory Council on Aging, 1999). Although three quarters of these older adults have at least one chronic health condition, many of them rate their health as good to excellent (National Advisory Council on Aging, 1999). These results suggest that many elderly individuals believe that their health is defined by more than the presence or absence of disease.

In North America, there is increasing talk about "healthy aging," a term generally characterized by discussion about how to extend an individual's number of disability-free years (Breslow, Reuben, & Wallace, 2000). The expression 'adding life to years, not just years to life' has recently become more prominent and connotes a view of health as a dynamic, multifaceted process of functioning effectively in everyday life, and not merely as a goal of freedom from disease or disability. From this perspective, health is defined as the ability to adapt to, respond to, or control, the challenges of daily life, and comprises physical, mental, social, and spiritual dimensions (National Advisory Council on Aging, 1999).

Despite the foregoing rhetoric concerning healthy aging, research regarding positive health outcomes such as subjective well-being, vitality, and positive mood continues to be overshadowed by the emphasis on studies attempting to find ways to reduce morbidity, mortality, and other negative health outcomes in the elderly population (e.g., depressive mood state, pain, and risk behaviours; Minkler, Schauffler, & Clements-Nolle, 2000). This biomedical and epidemiological approach to health likely is driven, in part, by economic considerations such as the goal of reducing health care spending, particularly among the geriatric population. Consequently, little emphasis has been placed on examining health practices from a more positive and humanistic perspective. This is unfortunate as there is a large literature on the concept of wellbeing outside the physical domain to draw upon. For example, an individual's sense of autonomy, mastery, relatedness to others, and vitality are important aspects of the psychological dimension of health (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Moreover, it has been postulated that optimal well-being is defined by the experience of complete involvement in activities that are both challenging and enjoyable, that require skill, active concentration and attention (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Related factors, dubbed as "salutogenic," (health-generating or health-maintaining), are comprehensibility (being able to make sense of a situation), manageability (believing one has the resources to deal with or adapt to the situation), and meaningfulness (believing that there is a reason why one is faced with difficult situations and accepting and that these situations are challenges worth working through; Antonovsky, 1987b). Perhaps because they vary from one individual to another, rather than being generalizable across a population (Antonovsky, 1987a), medical research in the area of health outcomes rarely explores these wellness factors in interventions, focusing instead on indicators of physiological and psychological illness and disease.

In contrast to the conventional biomedical approach, health promotion is a field that has moved away from an illness-oriented conception to embrace a more holistic and positive conception of health. Health promotion has been defined as a process for assisting people to attain optimal levels of physical, psychological, and social well-being at individual and collective levels (National Advisory Council on Aging, 1999; World Health Organization, 1986). Current health promotion activities related to older adults exemplify this holistic philosophy through diverse programs and research, at individual, social, environmental, and political levels (e.g., Active Living Coalition for Older Adults, 1999; Alberta Community Development, 2000; National Advisory Council on Aging, 1999).

Unfortunately, although there has been much time and money invested in health promotion programs, they all face obstacles regarding utilization of services, or adherence to the desired behaviour by the target population. Relatively little is known about why some individuals readily engage in and continue with certain health promotion activities, while others do not. Recent recommendations in the area of health promotion for older adults, advanced by the National Advisory Council on Aging (1999), included the need to examine the role of motivation in health promoting behaviour, and the need for research on alternative approaches to health. An activity that is well suited to the exploration of these two areas of inquiry is Tai Chi. Tai Chi is an activity practiced by many older adults, yet little is known about the value this activity holds for them and why some sustain their involvement in TC over the long term.

The general goal of this thesis is to describe the experiences of older adults who engage in this (apparently) health promoting activity. Results will have implications for understanding how Tai Chi (TC) is related to positive aspects of health, such as well-being and optimal psychological functioning, as well as understanding what it is about TC that encourages practitioners to initiate and sustain TC practise.

Tai Chi: An Overview

TC is a Chinese martial art that integrates mental concentration, abdominal breathing, and purposeful body movement. It involves performing a 5 to 30 minute series of continuous spiral and circular movements of the whole body that include smooth weight shifts and balancing. Philosophically, Tai Chi embraces a holistic approach to health (e.g., mind-body unity) that is well suited to investigating a positive conception of health and health promotion. Tai Chi has become quite popular (particularly amongst middle-aged and older adults) as evidenced by numerous classes offered by local seniors' centers, community groups, and fitness centers. The proliferation of Tai Chi in North America provides an ideal opportunity to study seniors' experiences of this non-conventional health promotion activity.

Tai Chi has a long and complex history; it has been described as a moving meditation, combining Taoist philosophy with meditation and physical exercise (Clark, 2000). While there are a number of recognized styles of TC, each unique in appearance, they all appear to share fundamental characteristics. These include performing a series of postures in a continuous manner, applying full concentration while doing the TC movements, balancing physical relaxation and tension, and the outer appearance of softness contrasted with inner spiritual and mental strength. Several modified versions of the original TC styles have also been developed, some of which have been used in research (e.g., Wolf, Barnhart, Ellison, & Coogler, 1997) or to accommodate certain medical conditions such as Multiple Sclerosis (e.g., University of Alberta, 1990).

Literature search. The body of English-language health research literature on Tai Chi is relatively new. Most articles were published within the past 10 years, with the greatest volume occurring since 1995/96. To assess the current state of research on Tai Chi, a literature search using the following search words, "tai chi or t'ai chi or taichi, chi chih or chi chuan or chi ch'uan or chi quan," was conducted across Medline, CiNAHL, and PsycInfo databases. Searches were limited to human research, and English language. Literature reviews, qualitative and quantitative studies were eligible for inclusion, as well as studies conducted out of North America. Examples of articles that were excluded were those limited to describing Tai Chi or whose main focus was to discuss how to locate or plan Tai Chi programs.

A preliminary review showed that the bulk of the studies were short term and impact-focused, using older adult subjects. A comprehensive review of the TC literature to 1998 by Chen and Snyder (1999) indicated that much of the TC research focused on fall prevention, balance, and cardiovascular and respiratory effects. These studies used primarily quantitative indicators of the impact of Tai Chi such as heart rate, blood pressure, respiratory function, and balance. A smaller number of articles examined Tai Chi's effects on psychosocial factors such as sub-clinical depressed and anxious mood, and musculoskeletal conditions. The literature was further limited to those articles that included participants 55 years of age and older to capture studies using an older adult population, yielding approximately 24 studies, of which only 8 included positive health indicators, such as well-being and function in daily activities. Two of these studies broached the subject of motivation to engage in Tai Chi (Gavin, 2001; Li, McAuley, Harmer, Duncan, & Chaumeton, 2001). An overview of the existing research on Tai Chi with older adults is provided below, with an emphasis on the studies examining positive outcomes of Tai Chi and motivations for TC engagement (the reader is referred to the review by Chen and Snyder, 1999, for more detailed information on other research aspects of Tai Chi). All results reported in this literature review were statistically significant at the 0.05 level unless otherwise specified.

Research on Tai Chi From a Risk Factor Perspective

Fall prevention and balance. Much of the research on Tai Chi and falls among seniors has been reported out of the National Institute on Aging sponsored studies entitled Frailty and Injuries: Cooperative Studies of Intervention Techniques (FICSIT) in the United States. These studies were multi-centre, randomized controlled trials of health promotion interventions (of which Tai Chi was one) for adults 70 years of age and older (Kutner, Barnhart, Wolf, McNeely, & Xu, 1997). Compared to balance training and control conditions, a 15-week, modified Tai Chi intervention reduced onset to falls, fear of falling, risk of falls (Wolf et al., 1996). Tai Chi was also found to improve postural stability, movement confidence, kinesthetic sense, and lower extremity strength, and long term (lifetime) Tai Chi practice was associated with better static and dynamic balance (Tse & Bailey, 1992)

Cardiovascular and respiratory function. In healthy seniors as well as those post-heart attack, Tai Chi practice was associated with improvements in cardiovascular and ventilatory function at least comparable to more vigorous forms of exercise (such as aerobics, stationary cycling, brisk walking), but without the strenuousness characteristic of these activities (i.e. high increases in heart rate, stroke volume, and cardiac output; (Brown, Mucci, Hetzler, & Knowlton, 1989; Channer, Barrow, Barrow, Osborne, & Ives, 1996; Young, Appel, Jee, & Miller, 1999). Additionally, if practiced over the long term, Tai Chi also appeared to have a protective effect on respiratory function in older adults (Lai, Lan, Wong, & Teng, 1995).

Other research on Tai Chi. Kirsteins, Dietz, and Hwang (1991) declared Tai Chi to be a comparable and safe alternative activity to typical weight bearing exercises for ambulatory, medically stable, patients with rheumatoid arthritis as it did not exacerbate disease symptoms. The little research that had been conducted on psychological outcomes of TC prior to the year 2000 found TC to be helpful in reducing disruptive mood states (e.g., depression, anxiety, anger; Jin, 1989; Ross & Presswalla, 1998; Wolf et al., 1996). Ross et al (1999) did a pilot study with 11 older women and found that 18 TC classes over a period of 6 weeks led to decreased perceived pain, improved active range of motion, and reduced trait anxiety.

Research on Tai Chi From a Well-being and Functional Outcome Perspective

Despite a prolific body of anecdotal information regarding the salutary effects of Tai Chi on physical and psychosocial well-being in lay literature and resources[1] (Chuckrow, 1998; Clark, 2000; Lam, 1998; Lee, Lee, Lee, & Lee, 1996; Sun & Chen, 1995), with the exception of an article by Kutner et al (1997), until 2001, there was little published research on wellness outcomes of Tai Chi (Gavin, 2001; Li, Duncan et al., 2001; Li, Harmer, Chaumeton, Duncan, & Duncan, 2002; Li, Harmer et al., 2001; Li, McAuley et al., 2001).

Kutner et al (1997) presented data on the self-reported benefits of Tai Chi practice. Compared to a balance training group, TC participants were more likely to report positive effects on their life overall and functioning in daily activities. Respondents in the Tai Chi condition reported increased body awareness, energy, mindfulness (sense of focus, consciousness, and alertness), and confidence and security in moving and balance. In addition, they reported feeling more relaxed, and having an improved mental outlook. Almost 50% of the participants assigned to the Tai Chi conditions registered for further Tai Chi classes following the end of the study; these individuals considered the incorporation of Tai Chi into their lives as an increase in their degree of their physical activity involvement. Some of the respondents' actual statements about the effects of Tai Chi were included in the article (e.g., "felt as though I had more energy and strength"; "increased awareness of different facets of well-being"; "more conscious of what I'm doing"; (Kutner et al., 1997, p. P245).

In 2001 and 2002, a series of four randomized controlled studies by Li and colleagues specifically focused on Tai Chi from a well-being perspective (Li, Duncan et al., 2001; Li et al., 2002; Li, Harmer et al., 2001; Li, McAuley et al., 2001). Li, Harmer et al (2001) conducted a 3-month, trial of TC with low-active adults and determined that this low-intensity exercise program was as beneficial as strength training and aerobics for improving physical function (a health-related quality of life indicator), in terms of mobility (e.g. walking, stair-climbing), basic activities of daily living (e.g., dressing, bathing), as well as performance in moderate to vigorous physical activities (e.g., carrying groceries, running), as measured by participant self-report. In another study, Li, McAuley, et al (2001) determined that: 1) self-efficacy for Tai Chi movement increased with practise, and 2) that task-specific self-efficacy was a factor related to adherence to TC. The authors also proposed that TC practise may enhance other aspects of well-being, given the link between self-efficacy and psychological well-being. Other studies by Li and colleagues appear to support this position, as TC practise was found to increase older adults' global and domain-specific self-esteem (in this case, physical self-worth, physical condition, attractive body, and perceived strength (Li et al., 2002), as well as other aspects of psychological well-being (positive affect, life satisfaction, and health perception) (Li, Duncan et al., 2001).

---

[1] E.g., books and instructional videos authored by long term Tai Chi instructors/practitioners

The only study to include a qualitative data collection component was a process evaluation profiling older adult TC participants by Gavin (2001) that included data from brief phone interviews, as well as surveys. From survey responses, the top five reasons for joining TC class were: physical fitness, health benefits, mental health, friendship/social reasons, and fun/enjoyment. Impressions from TC practitioners about their involvement in a TC class were collected via brief telephone interviews. Eighty-six older adult TC practitioners, ranging from complete beginners to individuals with up to 7 years' experience were asked several questions to find out about why they joined TC, what they thought about the TC movements and the class overall, how they felt immediately after a class, and whether their expectations of the TC class had been met. Respondents said that they had joined TC because they perceived it as gentle and relaxing, for physical fitness gains and physical/mental health benefits, and because they were interested in learning a new activity. Gavin found that self-efficacy for performing the TC movements was high for both TC adherers and dropouts, but that adherers reported a greater number of benefits (e.g. improved concentration, relaxation, agility, balance and mobility, decreased pain), and felt a sense of accomplishment, while dropouts either did not feel any differently than before they began the TC class, or they did not feel that they had achieved anticipated results. One of Gavin's recommendations was that, "Qualitative studies are...needed to better understand the experience of older adults trying novel forms of exercise such as Tai Chi....." (Gavin, 2001, p. 236).

Summary

In summary, studies of Tai Chi in current health research are relatively recent, and focus predominantly on disease prevention and harm reduction outcomes associated with aging. In these respects, Tai Chi has been found to play a protective role in terms of fall prevention, respiratory function, and cardiovascular risk factor reduction. Initial research suggests that Tai Chi is associated with psychosocial/mental health and functional benefits. The few studies that include TC practitioners' verbatim comments provide an intriguing glimpse into salutary benefits of Tai Chi and motivational aspects intrinsic to the activity (Gavin, 2001; Jin, 1992; Kutner et al., 1997). However, our understanding of the role that Tai Chi may play in more positive aspects of health, as well as in our knowledge of how Tai Chi becomes a valued activity to older adult practitioners is still in its infancy. Existing quantitative measures do not appear to fully capture the complexity and variety of practitioners' experiences of Tai Chi. For example, the fact that Tai

Chi participants in Kutner et al.'s (1997) study spontaneously qualified and elaborated on their responses to the yes/no interview questions underscored that participants felt that these experiences were important for them to share and indicated that they experienced things beyond what can be captured in a fixed response format. Exploring the experience of TC from the practitioner's perspective will provide valuable direction for future research and physical activity program planning. Consequently, an in-depth, qualitative, interview approach is required to more fully understand the experiences of Tai Chi and their meaning for older adult practitioners from their own perspective.

Purpose of the Study

The population is aging, and as such research and program development focused on extending, not only lifespan, but also quality of life, in terms of maintaining, regaining, and increasing our abilities to meet the challenges of everyday living as we grow older is essential. Significant gaps in current knowledge exist in terms of research on wellness aspects of aging, and motivational factors for engaging in, and sustaining engagement, in health promoting behaviours amongst seniors. Tai Chi is a case in point - much anecdotal information exists about the health enhancing effects of this martial art (such as relaxation, increased energy), and despite relatively low key promotion, TC is becoming increasingly popular, yet the current body of Tai Chi research literature is weighted heavily toward risk factor management, leaving health enhancement aspects and reasons for valuing and dedication to this health promotion activity virtually unexplored. The assumptions going into this study are that: 1) research on TC is relatively new, and has been driven from a researcher perspective, and 2) despite the growing popularity of TC, particularly amongst the senior population, little is known about motivational factors for initiation and continuation of this activity, and 3) Long term, dedicated TC practitioners, with their years of practical experience of TC, are a source of valuable input regarding the initial and ongoing appeal of TC, as well as the lived experience and perceived benefits (short and long term) of this activity. It is thus timely to use a phenomenological approach to systematically describe TC from a dedicated, older adult practitioner perspective in order to better understand the common meanings and experiences of TC, and to guide further research on the role of TC in healthy aging.

The purpose of this study was to describe the experience of Tai Chi from the perspective of older adults who are committed to regular practice. The general research question underlying this study is: What is the experience of Tai Chi for older adult practitioners who are committed to regular practice? In providing an answer to this question, the study focused on documenting shared experiences of Tai Chi by answering four specific research questions:

1. What motivates initiation of Tai Chi practise?
2. What motivates continuation of Tai Chi practise?
3. What is the lived experience of Tai Chi practise?
4. What are perceived positive outcomes of Tai Chi practise

The rationale for this study was to provide a systematic assessment of qualitative data to supplement current literature about the salutary experiences of Tai Chi, and to better understand how committed older adult practitioners perceive Tai Chi. Each of the four questions correspond to important areas for qualitative research physical activity in the aging population as identified by O'Brien Cousins & Horne (1999); thus this study contributes to the existing body of research on TC as well as to the broader area of exercise gerontology

Chapter 2. Methods

Overview

The study was conducted from September through December 2001. Ethical approval was obtained from the University of Alberta, Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation ethics review panel. A pilot project with two participants was conducted in August 2001 to refine the process of recruitment, the interview protocol (including time allotment for its completion with each participant), and the researcher's interviewing skills prior to commencing the actual study. During the full-scale study, eight older adults, experienced in and dedicated to TC practise, were recruited from four community TC groups in Edmonton. Each participant completed up to three audiotaped interviews. The semi-structured interview format included open-ended questions encouraging participants to describe motivating factors for initiating and continuing TC practise, as well as lived experience, and perceived outcomes, of TC practise. Each interview was transcribed, content relevant to the four research questions was paraphrased then verified with the participant so they could correct, clarify, and elaborate on their responses. Once all interviews were completed, each participant's paraphrases for each research question were compared to those of every other participant. This constant comparative process resulted in a profile of essential (i.e. shared by all), common (shared by some), and unique experiences of TC.

Participant Recruitment

Recruitment took place over a one-month period from September 2001 through October 2001 and resulted in 20 volunteers, of which 7 completed the study protocol. The researcher secured permission from key contacts (TC instructors, program coordinators) to recruit study participants from four community Tai Chi sites in Edmonton, Alberta: West Edmonton Seniors, Edmonton Chinatown Multicultural Association, and the west and south side branches of the Taoist Tai Chi Society[2] At each location, the key contact formally introduced the researcher to the group of practitioners in the Tai Chi class. The researcher completed a brief recruitment presentation to Tai Chi practitioners, describing the purpose of the study, eligibility criteria, rights of the participant, credentials of the researcher, and use of the data. Written copies of the information letter and eligibility criteria were also available during the presentation. Study inclusion criteria are summarized in Table 1.

---

[2] For the pilot study, permission was secured from key contacts at the Chinese United Church and Chinese Catholic Church Tai Chi groups

Table 1

Study Inclusion Criteria

- 55+ years old
- Practise Tai Chi (any style) twice a week or more for at least two years
- Proficient in English
- Willing to talk about personal experiences of Tai Chi
- Able to meet for up to three 60-90 minute sessions over a two-week period
- Willing to be audio taped during the interview process

The age of 55+ years was arbitrarily chosen to classify an individual as a senior because this represents the popularly recognized age for early retirement. One participant joined the study with her partner, and it was not until the interview session that the researcher discovered she was under 55 years of age; however, this participant's data was retained in the study. The researcher initially requested that eligible individuals be practising TC twice a week or more for at least two years, it was noted that a number of people practised only once a week, but had done so consistently for 4 years or more. Therefore, the description of "committed practitioner" was amended to include those individuals.

The researcher intended to recruit 6-8 individuals for this study, This sample size falls within the recommended sample size for phenomenological studies focused on describing essential features of experiences (Morse, 2000; Sandelowski, 1995). Since the aim of the study was to gain an in-depth, accurate understanding of personal experiences, the sample was necessarily small so that adequate time and attention could be given to the elicitation and verification of data through the use of multiple interviews with each respondent. The researcher anticipated that more than 8 people would volunteer, so she explained during the recruitment presentation that volunteers who did not participate in the in-depth interviews would be given an option to respond to the guiding questions in writing.

Individuals interested in volunteering for the study provided their name and phone number following each recruitment presentation. Each volunteer was telephoned and sent (via email, fax, or regular mail) a package consisting of an information letter (see Appendix A), background information sheet (see Appendix B), and a guiding questions sheet (see Appendix C). Volunteers were asked to return the completed background info sheet within a week of receiving it. The researcher screened participants' by phone and/or by background info sheets and contacted each volunteer, either to set a mutually agreed upon time and place for face-to-face interviews or to invite the volunteer to respond to the guiding questions in writing. Of the 20 people who volunteered for the study, 7 completed the full interview protocol. These seven participants (plus one of the pilot participants) are the focus of the remainder of the study. Regarding the other 13 volunteers, 9 provided written responses to the guiding questions, one volunteer withdrew due to time conflicts, and three were excluded because they either did not meet the criteria of English-language fluency or had less than two years' TC experience.

Procedures

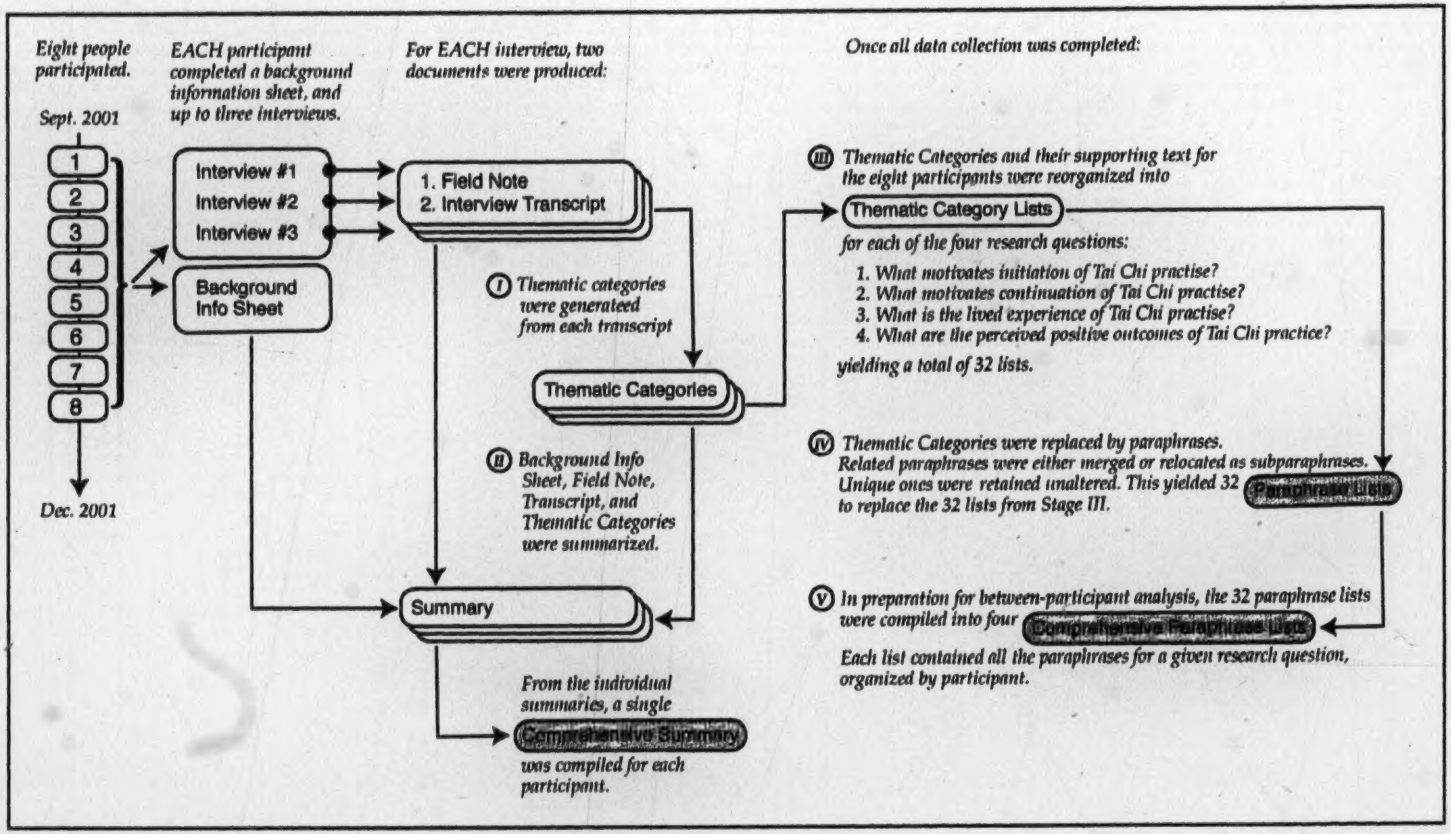
Interview setting. Face-to-face interviews were used to allow the researcher to encourage in-depth accounts, verify and clarify information. The researcher negotiated with the participant to hold interviews in a setting familiar to the participant (e.g., the participant's TC classroom or their home), reimbursed travel costs on as-needed basis, and offered light refreshments at the interview site. These practices were intended to improve respondents' comfort level, to avoid unduly inconveniencing them, and to show appreciation for their contribution to the study.

Preliminaries. Prior to being interviewed, the participant was reminded about the contents of the study package s/he had received. The participant's demographic and descriptive data were collected via the background information sheet, so if s/he had not already done so, the participant was reminded to complete and return it to the researcher. S/he was also asked to review the information letter and guiding question sheet in preparation for the first interview.

Interview process. During the first interview, participants and researcher reviewed the information letter, completed the consent form (see Appendix D), and respondents were asked to select an identifier (e.g. name or initials) for their data. The researcher then clarified any responses from the background information sheet as necessary and the in-depth interview process began. The researcher employed a semi-structured interview format with guiding questions and probes to explore the phenomenon of the participant's experience of Tai Chi in relation to three domains: motivation to initiate/continue TC practise, lived experience of TC, and perceived outcomes related to practicing Tai Chi. Examples of guiding questions were: How did you get started in TC?; What it is keeps you practising TC after all these years?; How do you feel when you practise TC?; In what way do you feel TC has influenced your life? (See Appendix C for the full interview guide).

Each participant completed one, two, or three audiotape-recorded interviews of approximately 30 to 90 minutes in length over a 2-week time span. Repeated interviews allowed positive rapport to develop over time, and provided opportunities to revisit topics of discussion for clarification, verification, and expansion, by both researcher and participant. The researcher followed a process of completing an interview, field note writing, interview transcription and analysis (thematic category and summary generation) described in "data collection" section that follows. This process was repeated for each subsequent interview with a participant. For the last interaction with a participant, the participant was asked to review the summary/ies and provide feedback regarding accuracy of the researcher's summary account.

Figure 1. Interview Process and Materials Generated


Eight people participated.
Sept. 2001
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
Dec. 2001
EACH participant completed a background information sheet, and up to three interviews.
Interview #1
Interview #2
Interview #3
Background Info Sheet
For EACH interview, two documents were produced:
1. Field Note
2. Interview Transcript
Ⓘ Thematic categories were generateed from each transcript
Thematic Categories
Ⓘⓘ Background Info Sheet, Field Note, Transcript, and Thematic Categories were summarized.
Summary
From the individual summaries, a single
Comprehensive Summary
was compiled for each participant.
Once all data collection was completed:
Ⓘⓘⓘ Thematic Categories and their supporting text for the eight participants were reorganized into
Thematic Category Lists
for each of the four research questions:
1. What motivates initiation of Tai Chi practise?
2. What motivates continuation of Tai Chi practise?
3. What is the lived experience of Tai Chi practise?
4. What are the perceived positive outcomes of Tai Chi practice?
yielding a total of 32 lists.
Ⓘⓥ Thematic Categories were replaced by paraphrases.
Related paraphrases were either merged or relocated as subparaphrases.
Unique ones were retained unaltered. This yielded 32
Paraphrase Lists
to replace the 32 lists from Stage III.
ⓥ In preparation for between-participant analysis, the 32 paraphrase lists were compiled into four
Comprehensive Paraphrase Lists
Each list contained all the paraphrases for a given research question, organized by participant.

S/he could clarify, expand on, correct, or delete any information, and this was also an opportunity for the researcher to ask any final follow-up questions. At the end of this session, each participant was also asked for permission to be contacted by telephone if further information was required.

The researcher conducted the interviews sequentially (i.e., Participant #1 would complete the three interviews over two weeks, then interviews would commence with Participant #2, and so on, without any overlap between participants). This was to ensure adequate time to transcribe each interview, complete and verify preliminary analyses for one participant prior to going on to the next. The number of interviews conducted with a participant depended on factors such as how quickly rapport was developed and how much a participant had to say in response to the guiding questions, how much time and energy the participant had. Of the eight participants, 2 were interviewed all 3 times, 3 were interviewed twice, and 3 completed a single interview. Because the researcher had few follow-up questions for these latter participants, they were given the option of either: 1) meeting for a very brief subsequent interview; or 2) providing their feedback about the accuracy of their interview summary and responding to follow-up questions in writing and sending their responses back to the researcher. The three participants in question all chose the written response option. Figure 1 summarizes the interview process for each of the eight participants, as well as the materials generated from each interview.

Data Collection and Transcription

As illustrated in the previous figure, four documents were generated from every interview (three documents for written respondents): 1) a field note (omitted in the case of written respondents), 2) a transcript, 3) a thematic categories document, and 4) a summary including any follow-up questions. Field notes and transcripts were direct products of the data collection process and are described in more detail below. The thematic categories and summary documents were generated through analysis of the transcript, field note, and background info sheet; this procedure is described in the data analysis section.

Field notes. The researcher wrote a field note following each interview, in which she documented initial impressions, reminders, follow-up questions, and obvious overlaps in experiences between participants.

Transcripts. The researcher used a transcription machine and word processor to transform audio-taped interview data verbatim into a transcript. This involved playing a section of tape and typing into a computer word processing program, rewinding and replaying sections to ensure accuracy of the wording. For the purposes of this study, emphasis was placed on the content of the interview, rather than paralinguistics, therefore pauses were not timed and changes in voice inflection were not documented. Short pauses were indicated with commas, and laughter, longer pauses and gestures were noted in parentheses). Each interview was between 30 and 90 minutes in length; transcription took approximately 3-4 times the length of the audio-taped interview. Therefore, interviews took between 1 1/2 and up to 5 hours to transcribe. For participants who provided written responses instead of a final interview written responses to the follow-up questions were transcribed as well, and are referred to as 'transcripts' hereafter. Each page of transcript had wide margins on left and right sides for written notes. Every line of transcribed data was numbered sequentially, in the margin of the transcript, for ease of reference. In all subsequent documents, the researcher used a referencing system in which the first number identified the participant, the middle number corresponded to the interview transcript, and the last numbers referred to the line numbers from the transcript. For example, a quote with the reference [3.2.42-48] originated from participant #3, interview transcript 2, lines 42 to 48. In this manner, quoted text could be easily located within the original document. This line numbering and numerical referencing system was also used for field note data. Transcripts for each of the eight study participants are found in Appendix E.

Thematic categories document. A 'thematic categories' document, informed by transcript and field note data, organized into the three domains of TC experience (motivation, lived experience, and perceived outcomes) was generated after each interview in a process detailed in the "Within-Participant Analysis" section.

Summaries. Following each interview, the researcher created a summary document containing information from the participant's background information sheet, transcript, and thematic categories. Follow-up questions from the researcher were also included at the end of the each summary. This summary document was the focus for dialogue at the final interview with a participant, or the focus for feedback in the case of participants who chose the written response option. This feedback from the last face-to-face or written communication with the participant essentially included his/her edits, elaborations, and any information they had verified or clarified; participants were not asked for feedback on this last summary.

Chapter 3. Analyses

Overview

The general goals of the analyses were to: 1) reduce the raw data from each interview into paraphrases of TC experience, organized by each research question (within-participant analysis) and 2) compare these paraphrases across participants (between-participant analysis) in order to arrive at descriptions of essential, common, and unique features of TC experience. Thematic analysis principles (Boyatzis, 1998) were used for raw data reduction (i.e., identifying thematic categories and creating outlines or summaries of the data). Numerically–aided phenomenology was used (Wild & Kuiken, 1992) to guide paraphrase development and pair-wise comparisons of paraphrases across participants.

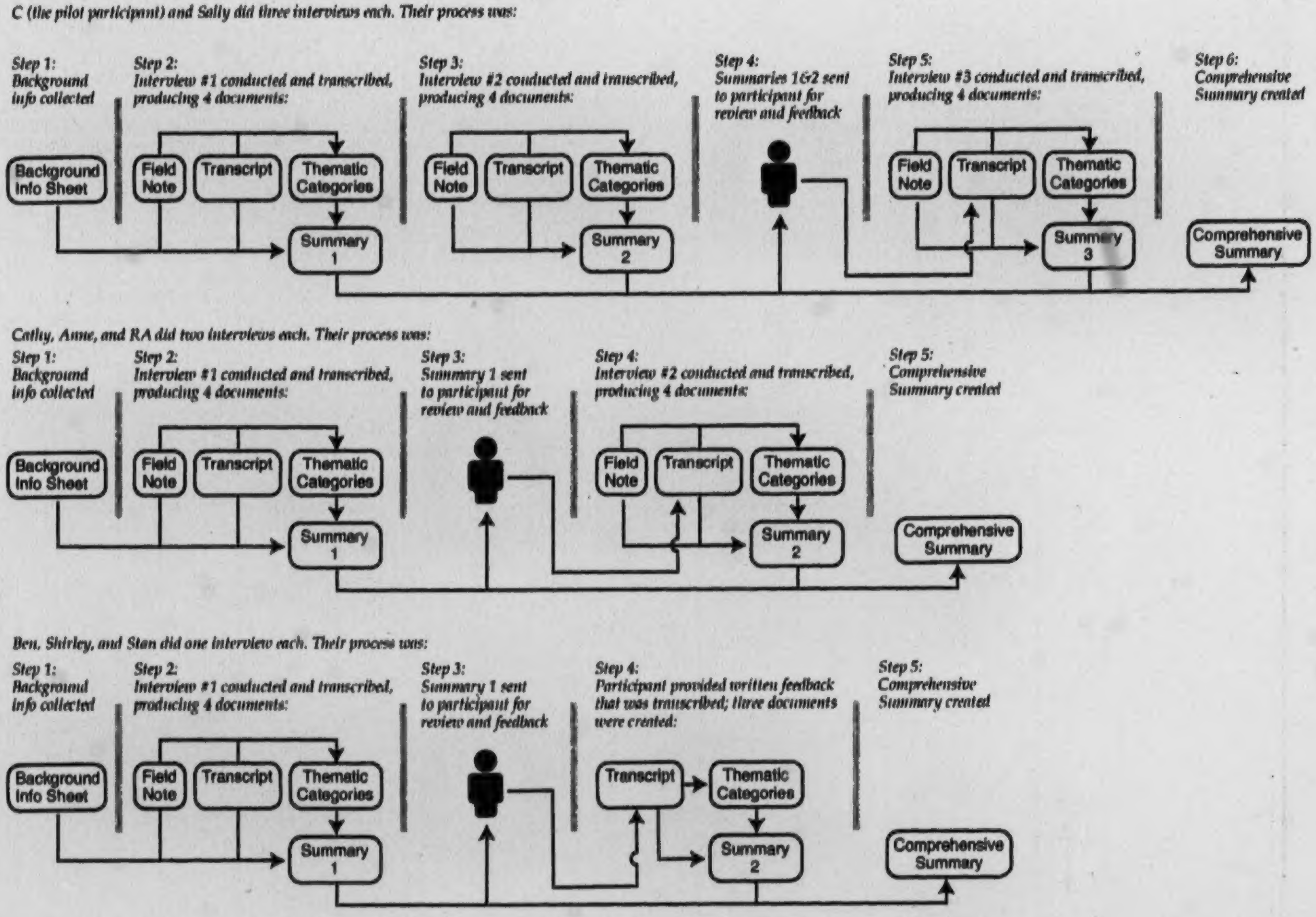
Three different units of analysis were used. Thematic Categories were short phrases representing the content of a passage of interview text. Thematic categories may be manifest (based on the visible content of the transcript) or latent (based on researcher's interpretation) and may or may not contain the participant's own words (Boyatzis, 1998). Paraphrases were short phrases summarizing and reflecting the participant's reported experience as closely and as faithfully as possible (i.e. based on the visible content of the transcript). A paraphrase in this context was either a verbatim quote or a restatement of the participant's words. Meaning units were a single representative phrase capturing paraphrases sharing the same meaning across two or more participants. Meaning units may be created from semantically analogous paraphrases (i.e., they use similar wording and have shared meaning), or contextually related paraphrases (i.e., those that are dissimilar in wording but share a common meaning).

In summary, thematic categories represented the researcher's initial impressions of each participant's data, while paraphrases represented individual experiences of TC using language that closely followed each participant's accounts. Meaning units generated from these paraphrases indicated shared TC experiences between two or more individuals. Described in more detail later, the density of meaning units provided information about the degree of commonality of shared TC experiences among the study participants, while paraphrases that were not grouped into meaning units identified TC experiences that were unique to a given participant.

Within-Participant Analyses (WPA)

The purpose of WPA was to reduce and organize the raw interview data in order to provide a succinct picture of each individual's TC experience, in a format suitable for between-participant analysis.

Figure 2. Overview of Within-Participant Data Analyses.


C (the pilot participant) and Sally did three interviews each. Their process was:
Step 1: Background info collected
Step 2: Interview #1 conducted and transcribed, producing 4 documents:
Step 3: Interview #2 conducted and transcribed, producing 4 documents:
Step 4: Summaries 1&2 sent to participant for review and feedback
Step 5: Interview #3 conducted and transcribed, producing 4 documents:
Step 6: Comprehensive Summary created
Background Info Sheet
Field Note
Transcript
Thematic Categories
Summary 1
Summary 2
Summary 3
Comprehensive Summary
Cathy, Anne, and RA did two interviews each. Their process was:
Step 1: Background info collected
Step 2: Interview #1 conducted and transcribed, producing 4 documents:
Step 3: Summary 1 sent to participant for review and feedback
Step 4: Interview #2 conducted and transcribed, producing 4 documents:
Step 5: Comprehensive Summary created
Background Info Sheet
Field Note
Transcript
Thematic Categories
Summary 1
Summary 2
Comprehensive Summary
Ben, Shirley, and Stan did one interview each. Their process was:
Step 1: Background info collected
Step 2: Interview #1 conducted and transcribed, producing 4 documents:
Step 3: Summary 1 sent to participant for review and feedback
Step 4: Participant provided written feedback that was transcribed; three documents were created:
Step 5: Comprehensive Summary created
Background Info Sheet
Field Note
Transcript
Thematic Categories
Summary 1
Summary 2
Comprehensive Summary

Transcripts and field notes were the materials used in this phase of analysis. WPA involved five stages: 1) thematic category generation, 2) summary generation, 3) thematic category reorganization, 4) paraphrase generation, and 5) comprehensive paraphrase list generation. Figure 2 illustrates each of the five stages of WPA.

As the reader can see from the previous figure, Stages 1 and 2 of WPA were conducted in conjunction with the data collection phase, while Stages 3-5 were conducted once data collection was finished; thematic categories and summaries were developed immediately following each interview, comprehensive lists, and paraphrases were generated following the end of data collection.

Unless otherwise stated, each stage of WPA refers to how the data was treated for each individual participant. WPA Stages 1 and 2 were conducted immediately following each interview, and repeated for every subsequent interview.

Stage 1) Thematic category generation. Each transcript was read twice - once, to get a general feel for the content, and a second reading to categorize the content into topics or thematic categories. During the first reading, the researcher highlighted pertinent sections of text, made written notes of areas for clarification and additional contextual information in the left margin, and corrected transcription errors. The transcript was then re-read and proposed thematic categories identified in the right margin. A *thematic categories document* was created wherein thematic categories were listed along with supporting text from the transcript The supporting text was presented both in its complete form, as well as broken down into component statements (Table 2).

Stage 2) Summary generation. The researcher reduced the demographic and contextual data from the background information sheet, field note, and transcript, and the content of the thematic category document, into a 1-2 page *summary*. Once all interviews with a given participant were completed, a single *comprehensive summary* (see Appendix F) was compiled from his/her individual summary documents.

Stages 3-5 of analysis were conducted once the data collection phase had been completed, and are described for the individual participant, unless otherwise specified.

Stage 3) Thematic category reorganization. The contents of the thematic categories documents were reorganized into four *comprehensive thematic category lists*. Each list contained data related to one of the four research questions stated guiding the study, from all interviews completed with the participant. There was one list each for initiation, continuation, lived experience, and perceived outcomes.

Table 2

Examples of Thematic Categories (Underlined) with Supporting Text in Complete Form and Component Statements

---

Thematic category

Increased verbal aggression/assertiveness

"...doing the Sword from March until now of this year, has made me much more decisive, um, and a little aggressive, I have to admit – verbally aggressive – now, I don't mind stating my opinion when before, I might have just let things slide, or overlook something that I might find offensive, I'll now voice my offense. Um, probably it's more difficult to live with but it's more honest." [2.1.247-251]

Statements

- doing the Sword from March until now of this year, has made me much more decisive
- (doing the Sword from March until now of this year, has made me) a little aggressive, I have to admit – verbally aggressive
- now, I don't mind stating my opinion when before, I might have just let things slide
- (when before I might have) overlook(ed) something that I might find offensive, I'll now voice my offense.
- probably it's more difficult to live with but it's more honest

Thematic category

More aggressive/assertive

"I just don't withdraw from challenging situations as much as I used to and so I just interpreted that as a more aggressive approach to life, but 'assertive' is better." [2.3.10-12]

Statements

- I just don't withdraw from challenging situations as much as I used to
- I just interpreted that as a more aggressive approach to life
- but 'assertive' is better

Stage 4) Paraphrase generation. Each comprehensive thematic category list was reviewed to compare each thematic category to its supporting text. In keeping with a phenomenological approach of exploring phenomena from the perspective of individuals experiencing it, thematic categories were replaced by *paraphrases* that reflected the participant's experience in his/her words as closely as possible (Table 3). This part of the analysis was designed to ensure that analytic units were created in order to maintain fidelity to each participant's own reported experience. A paraphrase in this context referred to either a restatement or a direct quote from the supporting text.

Table 3
Replacement of Thematic Categories by Paraphrases

Old thematic category:
Increased verbal aggression/assertiveness

> "...doing the Sword from March until now of this year, has made me much more decisive, um, and a little aggressive, I have to admit – verbally aggressive – now, I don't mind stating my opinion when before, I might have just let things slide, or overlook something that I might find offensive, I'll now voice my offense. Um, probably it's more difficult to live with but it's more honest." [2.1.247-251]

Replaced by paraphrase:
I don't mind stating my opinion when before, I might have just let things slide

Old thematic category:
More aggressive/assertive

> "I just don't withdraw from challenging situations as much as I used to and so I just interpreted that as a more aggressive approach to life, but 'assertive' is better." [2.3.10-12]

Replaced by paraphrase:
I just don't withdraw from challenging situations as much as I used to

Each paraphrase was then compared to every other paraphrase in the list for that participant (Wild, 1988; Wild & Kuiken, 1992). Supporting text under each paraphrase was read to determine if two paraphrases were synonymous, expansions or contractions of one another, or completely different from each other. Similar paraphrases were merged under a single, representative paraphrase (Table 4).

Table 4
Example of Similar Paraphrases Merged Under a Single Representative Paraphrase

Paraphrase	Representative paraphrase
• I've accomplished doing tai chi reasonably well	• I had some idea of accomplishment
•	
• I had some idea of accomplishment	

The paraphrase generation stage yielded four *paraphrase lists* per participant (one list for each research question, see Appendix G). Each paraphrase list contained paraphrases, sub-paraphrases, and supporting text, thus allowing for any between-participant analyses to be conducted at either a paraphrase or statement level.

Stage 5) Comprehensive paraphrase list generation. As a preparatory stage for between-participant analysis, the paraphrase lists for all participants were grouped to form 4 *comprehensive paraphrase lists* (see Appendix H). Each list contained all the paraphrases and sub-paraphrases for a given research question, organized by participant. All supporting text was stripped leaving only a list of paraphrases and sub-paraphrases. The researcher reviewed each comprehensive paraphrase list in the context of the supporting text, field notes, and comprehensive summaries to confirm that the information in the paraphrases accurately reflected the participant's voiced experience, and refined paraphrases/sub-paraphrases as necessary. This process yielded the following number of paraphrases and sub-paraphrases:

- 54 for motivation for initiation of TC practise
- 113 for motivation for continuation of TC practise
- 161 for lived experience of TC practise
- 170 for perceived outcomes of TC practise

In order to give the reader a sense of the content and format of comprehensive paraphrase lists, an excerpt of the comprehensive paraphrase list for TC initiation is shown in Table 5 (see Appendix H for the complete list of paraphrases for each research question)

Table 5
Excerpts of paraphrases from a comprehensive paraphrase list

I. Motivation for Initiation of TC Practise
C.
There was a Buddhist monk doing TC
It was quite beautiful
The head monk said [TC is] an excellent thing to combine with meditation
Sally
I saw [TC] in action – we would stand and watch the TC group doing demonstrations at the fringe
[I liked] the music
I liked watching these people moving in unison
Shirley
[My] doctor said, 'Why don't you join Tai Chi for your stress/depression'
[My husband said], 'We're gonna join Tai Chi'
[My husband said], 'You're gonna do it'
Cathy
Our son said to me, 'Mum you should do TC'
I had heard about it
I had seen it advertised

Between-Participant Analysis (BPA)

Prior to beginning BPA, the researcher re-read each of the eight comprehensive summaries to refresh, in her mind the portrait of each participant. She reviewed her field notes and log notes in conjunction with the four comprehensive paraphrase lists and refined paraphrases as necessary.

The four refined *comprehensive paraphrase lists* from WPA were the main materials used for BPA. To address questions about motivation for TC initiation, continuation, and the perceived outcomes of TC practise, BPA was conducted at the paraphrase level and is described first. Lived experience of TC, was also analyzed at the paraphrase level, however due to the richness of the descriptions and the subtle differences in experiences, the participant-specific paraphrase lists with supporting text were frequently used for reference.

Stage 1) Meaning unit generation. A spreadsheet program was used to create a qualitative data matrix for organizing and comparing paraphrases across participants. Paraphrases/sub-paraphrases were arranged in columns, under the respective participant's name. For the purpose of this stage, paraphrases and sub-paraphrases were treated as equivalent, so are referred to collectively as 'paraphrases'. Comparative sorting was done such that every participant's paraphrases were compared with those of every other participant (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Wild & Kuiken, 1992). Paraphrases were organized along the horizontal in one of two ways (Table 6): 1) semantically analogous paraphrases (i.e., those that use similar wording and have shared meaning) were arranged in the same row; 2) contextually equivalent paraphrases (i.e., those that are dissimilar in wording but are refer to a related/similar situation) were grouped in close proximity along the vertical, but arranged on separate rows (Table 7). Unique paraphrases maintained their original position.

Table 6
Example of Semantically Analogous Paraphrases Grouped in the Same Row

Catherine	RA	Stan
Not very far from where we lived	It was close to home	This (location) is actually closer, easier to get to (than others)

Table 7
Example of Contextually Equivalent Paraphrases Grouped in Separate Rows

Catherine	RA	Cathy
The head monk said TC was a good thing to combine with meditation		
	(My wife said) 'Well you should maybe try (TC) or look into it'	
		Our son said to me 'Mum you should do TC'

Groups of semantically analogous paraphrases and contextually equivalent paraphrases were then collapsed into meaning units. A meaning unit was a short phrase representing a collection of two or more paraphrases with a shared meaning across participants (Table 8).

Table 8
Examples of Semantically Analogous and Contextually Equivalent Paraphrases Collapsed to Form Meaning Units

Semantically Analogous paraphrases:

- Not very far from where we lived
- It was close to home
- This (location) is actually closer, easier to get to (than others)

Meaning Unit

- The TC class is close to home

Contextually Equivalent paraphrases:

- The head monk said TC was a good thing to combine with meditation
- (My wife said) 'Well you should maybe try (TC) or look into it'
- Our son said to me 'Mum you should do TC'

Meaning Unit

- Someone I know said I should try TC

During the process of meaning unit creation, the researcher referenced participants' individual paraphrase lists to re-read the supporting text from which the paraphrases had been generated. The supporting text provided more context for paraphrases and assisted in the process of decision-making regarding whether the experience embodied in a paraphrase was similar enough to another individual's experience to warrant grouping them together as a meaning unit. The paraphrases and meaning units were then reread and refined; redundant ones were amalgamated, and ones that were too generic were removed (e.g. I feel good/I just like TC), further reducing the total number of paraphrases and meaning units. The process of meaning unit generation transformed the total number of paraphrases from the comprehensive paraphrase lists into meaning units as follows (Appendix I):

55 paraphrases into 10 meaning units related to motivation for TC initiation
113 paraphrases into 11 meaning units related to motivation for TC continuation
161 paraphrases into 10 meaning units related to lived experience of TC practise
170 paraphrases into 16 meaning units related to perceived outcomes of TC practise

Stage 2) Comparing density of shared experiences. A binary profile (Wild & Kuiken, 1992; Wild, Kuiken, & Schopflocher, 1995) was created in which every meaning unit about motivation for TC initiation was listed on the vertical axis, and participant's names were placed on the horizontal axis (Table 9)

Table 9

Example of a Binary Profile of Meaning Units

	Meaning Units	Total	%	C.	RA	Stan	Cathy	...
1)	It was close to home	4	100	1	1	1	1	
2)	Someone I know said I should try TC	3	75	1	1		1	
3)	...	...						

If a participant had an experience captured by the meaning unit, a numerical designation of "1" was assigned, and if not, then a "0" (represented by a blank cell) was assigned. Once all meaning units had been checked against each participant, the numbers were tallied horizontally. For example, if the reader looks across the second row in Table 9, s/he will see that a total of three participants, C., RA, and Cathy, mentioned something equivalent to "Someone I know said I should try TC", however one participant, Stan, did not. The binary profiles are presented in the Results section. It is important to note that the numerical assignment to each meaning unit and participant was not intended to imply a degree of value to various experiences. Rather, it is a systematic method of determining the degree of commonality of shared experiences amongst the study sample. For shared experiences, this method distinguished between those reported experiences that were universal or essential to TC practise among the sample (i.e. 100% of the participants experienced this), from those that were common to some or many, but not to all practitioners.

In summary, each paraphrase represented an aspect of reported experience for each individual participant. The meaning units generated from these paraphrases indicated shared TC experiences between two or more individuals. Resulting sums for each meaning unit showed whether these shared experiences were essential (shared by all participants) or common to some, but not all, participants, and to what degree. Those paraphrase that were not grouped into meaning units identified TC experiences that were unique to a study participant.

Acknowledging Unique Experiences

The process of BPA made readily apparent, both commonalities in experience across participants, as well as those experiences limited to a single study participant. As the focus of this phenomenological study was to describe shared experiences of TC, idiosyncratic experiences will not be discussed in the Results section. However, lists of the uniquely occurring paraphrases for each research question were maintained (see Appendix J) so that individual experiences of TC would not be lost.

Aggregate Data From Written Respondents

The reader is reminded that some study volunteers who were not included in the interviews, provided written responses to the guiding questions. Seven TC practitioners responded to all the guiding questions, and two provided partial data (see Appendix K). Responses were taken at face value and individuals were not contacted to clarify or elaborate on their responses. This data was aggregated as follows: quotes with shared meaning were grouped together and meaning units created to represent each grouping (Appendix L). No further analyses were done on these data. The findings from written respondents are briefly summarized in the Results section as they were used to inform the Discussion section of this thesis.

Chapter 4. Results

Overview

This section begins with a description of the study participants. Next, common features of TC experience (i.e., those shared by two or more participants) are presented, organized by research question. Following this, a comment is made regarding the aggregate data from written respondents. (Note: in the tables that follow, shading of alternate rows of data is used solely to improve ease of reading).

Participant Description

A profile of the eight study participants is shown in Table 10.

Table 10
Participant Profile

Participant	Sex	Age	Education	Country of Birth	Self-Rated Health	Chronic Health Conditions	Years of TC practise	Frequency of TC practise
C.	F	59	Post-secondary	Canada	Excellent	Osteoporosis	6	Daily
Sally	F	62	Post-secondary	Canada	Excellent	Hypertension Osteoporosis High cholesterol	5	1x/ week
Ben	M	55	Post-secondary	Germany	Good	Hypertension Hyperthyroidism	4.5	1-2x/week
Shirley	F	53	High school	Canada	Good	Osteoarthritis Depression	4.5	1x/week
Cathy	F	80	Post-secondary	Holland	Good	Osteoarthritis Rheumatoid Arthritis Diverticulitis Chronic fatigue syndrome, Raynaud's Respiratory problems	11	Daily
Anne	F	58	Post-secondary	Canada	Excellent	Osteoarthritis Diverticulosis Irritable bowel	11	Daily
RA	M	70	High school	Canada	Good	Hypertension Rheumatoid arthritis Gout	11	2x/week
Stan	M	67	Post-secondary	Canada	Good	Hypertension Osteoarthritis	5	4x/week

Participants were three men and five women, ranging from 53 to 80 years of age. Most were Canadian-born and all but two had completed post-secondary education. Three of the eight participants rated their health as "excellent", and the remaining five rated it as "good" (given the choices excellent, good, fair, and poor), despite having one or more chronic medical conditions (osteoporosis, arthritis, hypertension were the most common chronic conditions). Participants' level of TC experience ranged from four and a half to eleven years of practise, and their frequency of practise ranged from one to seven days per week.

What Motivates Initiation of TC Practise?

Meaning units representing motivations for initiating TC practise are displayed in Table 11. Again, the reader is reminded that the number "1", or "0" (represented by a blank cell) in the column under each participant's name does not designate a value, but simply indicates whether the participant expressed ("1") or did not express (blank cell) a statement equivalent to the meaning unit in question.

All but one participant reported multiple influences leading up to TC initiation. Generally, participants first either witnessed TC, or were told by someone they knew that they should try TC, then saw an advertisement for a class being held at a convenient location. An unexpected finding was that TC's aesthetic qualities were noted by participants upon witnessing a TC demonstration and sparked an interest in TC practise. Four of the five participants who talked about being motivated to try TC after they "saw [it] in action" recalled impressions such as "I thought it was quite beautiful", and "I liked watching these people move in unison". Another influence on TC initiation, mentioned by half the participants, was the thought that TC would not be too vigorous or too hard on their body. Less commonly voiced motivations for this group were: wanting to be physically active, thinking TC would help a health problem, and having enough time to practise.

Table 11
Motivation for TC Initiation

Meaning Units	Total	%	C.	Sally	Ben	Shirley	Cathy	Anne	RA	Stan
The class was conveniently located	6	75.0	1	1			1	1	1	1
I saw TC in Action (I thought it was quite beautiful, I liked watching these people move in unison)	5	62.5	1	1				1	1	1
I had heard about TC or saw it advertised	5	62.5	1		1		1	1		1
Someone I know told me to try TC	4	50.0	1			1	1		1	
I didn't think TC would be hard on my body	4	50.0	1		1				1	1
I wanted to be physically active	3	37.5			1		1	1		
I thought it could help a health problem	2	25.0	1						1	
I had enough time to practice	2	25.0	1					1		

What Motivates Continuation of TC Practise?

As shown in Table 12, several factors motivated experienced practitioners to continue TC practise. The most common influences for TC continuation were: I feel good (during and/or after TC practise), I enjoy it/ it's a fun class, the people are nice- it's a community feeling, and TC is always interesting and challenging. More specific details on "feeling better" were captured under the research question on perceived outcomes. Some participants stated they felt benefits after the first month, or first year, some mentioned that they expected the benefits would not be immediate, and the strength of the sensation of benefit ranged from "subtle but clearly there", to "If I didn't do TC I'd be walking with a cane right now". Half the participants mentioned that they do TC for the exercise and/or they were encouraged, directly or indirectly, to continue with TC. Encouragement came from a variety of sources (a family member, health care provider, TC instructor, or peers), and manifested itself as direct verbal encouragement to keep up with TC, or indirectly through reinforcement of beliefs that TC positively affects health. Less common factors for TC continuation were: TC gives some focus to the week, the TC teacher is very good, people in the class are helpful, and comparing instructors keeps one's interest up.

Table 12
Motivation for TC Continuation

Meaning Units	TOTAL	%	C.	Sally	Ben	Shirley	Cathy	Anne	RA	Stan
I feel good/better after doing TC- TC benefits me (Detailed in Perceived Outcomes)	7	87.5	1	1	1		1	1	1	1
I know what takes me to TC is that I enjoy it (doing TC/the class)/It's a fun class	7	87.5	1	1	1	1	1	1		1
The people in the TC group are nice - It's a community feeling	6	75.0	1	1	1	1		1		1
TC has an appeal in terms of being always challenging and interesting to learn -you never learn it completely	5	62.5			1		1	1	1	1
I do TC for the exercise	4	50.0		1	1	1				1
Someone encouraged me (directly or indirectly) to stay with TC	4	50.0	1		1			1	1	
TC gives the week some focus	2	25.0	1						1	
The teacher is very good	2	25.0	1							1
People in the class are very helpful	2	25.0		1						1
Comparing instructors keeps your interest up	2	25.0							1	1

What is the Lived Experience of TC Practise?

In terms of lived experience of TC practise, the data seemed to fall into two clusters: external experiences related to the TC environment (Table 13), and internal physical and mental experiences (Table 14).

As shown in Table 13, in terms of external experiences, participants most commonly mentioned being aware of other practitioners around them. Less common external experiences were: enjoying the TC music, natural environmental elements, and sensing a flow of energy in the room generated by people as they practise TC.

Table 13
External Features of Lived Experience of TC

Meaning Units	Total	%	C	Sally	Ben	Shirley	Cathy	Anne	RA	Stan
I'm aware of others around me	4	50.0	1				1	1		1
I enjoy the music – it blends with the TC moves and totally relaxes you	3	37.5	1		1	1				
Doing TC outdoors is quiet and peaceful	2	25.0	1					1		
When you're doing TC in a group that has learned it well, you can feel an energy flowing in the room	2	25.0		1				1		

Table 14
Internal Experiences of TC

Meaning Units	Total	%	C	Sally	Ben	Shirley	Cathy	Anne	RA	Stan
When you know the TC set well, your mind is free to do some of the meditative stuff – there is a detachment from the immediate environment and from problems or other things that might have been crowding your mind	8	100	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
I'm concentrating on where I am in the TC set and executing the moves properly	7	87.5	1	1		1	1	1	1	1
I totally relax – I feel very quiet and calm inside	6	75.0	1	1	1	1	1	1		
You're really paying attention to what is happening inside your body	6	75.0	1	1			1	1	1	1
Your body feels as though it's part of a flow	4	50.0	1	1	1			1		
When you know the TC set well, the moves come automatically, you do them without thinking	4	50.0		1	1			1	1	

Internal experiences of TC predominated participants' descriptions, and involved an apparently polarized co-existence of heightened awareness with a sense of detachment. The only essential TC experience was a feature of lived experience - feeling a sense of detachment during TC practise. Many participants reported concentrating on the TC moves, feeling relaxed and quiet, and paying attention to bodily sensations. Half of the participants reported that their body feels like "part of a flow" of energy and movement and that the TC moves come almost automatically.

Because the sensation of detachment was experienced by all participants in this study, the paraphrases and statements comprising the meaning unit "When you know the TC set well, your mind is free to do some of the meditative stuff – there is a detachment from the immediate environment and from problems or other things that might have been crowding your mind" were more closely examined, revealing four types of detachment: mental, environmental, physical, and temporal (Table 15).

Table 15

Internal Experiences of TC – Types of Detachment

Meaning Units	Total	%	C	Sally	Ben	Shirley	Cathy	Anne	RA	Stan
Mental Detachment										
A detachment from some or all thoughts (ranges from not thinking about problems, things I have to do, to, my mind goes blank)	7	87.5	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Environmental Detachment										
People and sounds around you move off into the background or disappear, I can visualize myself in a different place	7	87.5		1	1	1	1	1	1	
Physical Detachment										
You lose the overt physical sensation (of your body), I'll just detach from my pain	2	25.0	1					1		
Altered Perception of Time										
It's a timelessness feeling - I lose track of time	2	25.0			1			1		
Number of meaning units per participant			2	2	3	2	2	4	2	1

Almost all participants reported experiencing two or more of the four types of detachment when practising TC (as demonstrated at the bottom row of Table 15, where the reader will note that every participant except Stan expressed something equivalent to two or more of the meaning units regarding experiences of detachment). All participants said they experience either mental and/or environmental detachment when they practise TC. Mental detachment ranged from not thinking about problems, pain, or things they have to do, to not thinking about anything at all (e.g. "my mind goes blank"). Environmental detachment included being partially or completely unaware of people and sounds in the environment during TC practise. Two participants said they experience a detachment from bodily sensations, and two reported that they lose track of time when they practise TC.

Some participants qualified the circumstances under which they experience a sense of detachment. Knowing the TC set well was the most common condition for detachment. Other conditions varied by individual; some were more likely to experience detachment when practising with a group that knew the set well, or had enough members who knew the set well enough that the group could keep moving together. For one person, standing in the middle of the group was important; in that location, he did not feel pressure from other practitioners relying on him to cue them about upcoming moves as he did when he is on the periphery of the group. Participants also explained that the feeling of detachment varied in frequency and intensity from practise to practise.

What are Perceived Outcomes of TC Practise?

Study participants attributed a number of positive outcomes to TC practise. Perceived outcomes were all positive and fell into three clusters: Mental (psychological and cognitive benefits), spiritual, and physical. Mental and spiritual outcomes are presented in Table 16, followed by physical outcomes in Table 17. Overall, the benefits mentioned by the majority of participants were: relaxation and stress management, pain reduction, and improvements in circulation.

Table 16
Perceived Mental and Spiritual Outcomes of TC

Meaning Units	Total	%	C	Sally	Ben	Shirley	Cathy	Anne	RA	Stan
Mental Outcomes										
TC has helped me to relax	7	87.5	1	1	1	1		1	1	1
TC is part of my stress-coping strategies/stressful situations don't bother me as much	7	87.5	1	1	1	1	1	1		1
TC helps my mood	3	37.5	1			1			1	
Doing TC has provided me with more self-confidence	3	37.5	1	1		1				
TC has improved my memory and concentration	3	37.5	1			1		1		
I feel refreshed and rejuvenated after TC	2	25.0		1						1
TC brings emotions to the surface	2	25.0		1			1			
Spiritual Outcomes										
TC has helped to strengthen my connection with my spiritual self	4	50.0		1			1	1	1	

Table 17
Perceived Physical Outcomes of TC

Meaning Units	Total	%	C	Sally	Ben	Shirley	Cathy	Anne	RA	Stan
Physical										
TC is good to ease pain (especially related to arthritis)	6	75.0			1	1	1	1	1	1
TC helps my circulation	5	62.5	1	1			1	1		1
TC helps to keep my medical conditions under control	4	50.0				1	1	1		1
TC helps my flexibility – loosens everything up	4	50.0				1		1	1	1
I have a lot more energy and stamina	4	50.0		1	1				1	1
I notice improvement in day to day function	4	50.0		1				1	1	1
TC is good for building up muscle strength and tone	3	37.5		1					1	1
TC helps my balance and balance confidence	2	25.0							1	1
TC helps my respiration	2	25.0	1					1		

As shown in Table 16, most commonly experienced mental health benefits of TC practise were relaxation and stress-management. In terms of coping with stressful situations, participants felt that TC practise has helped in the following ways: problems seem less burdensome or disappear for awhile, TC helps them to gain insight into a problem, and they tend to take more time to consider situations before reacting. Half of the participants also reported that TC helped to strengthen the connection with their spiritual self, in terms of reassessing their values, coming to terms with beliefs about the afterlife, exploring other religions, and broadening their concept of spirituality. Less commonly-mentioned mental outcomes of TC were: improved concentration and memory (e.g., learning and recalling factual and sequential information), better mood (reduction in frequency and severity of negative mood, and improved emotional balance), improved self-confidence, feelings of refreshment and rejuvenation, and bringing underlying emotions to the surface to be dealt with in a more positive way.

With respect to physical outcomes (Table 17), participants primarily reported that TC contributed to reducing pain in joints and muscles, and improved circulation (e.g., in terms of blood pressure control, circulation to feet, hands, and head). Half of the practitioners said that their existing medical conditions (such as diverticulosis, hypertension, arthritis, and migraines) were under better control, to the point where medications for these conditions had been reduced or eliminated. A number of them also said they were more flexible and had more energy and stamina, both immediately following TC practise, as well as overall. Less-mentioned benefits of TC were: increased muscle strength and tone, and an improvement in balance and balance confidence. Half of the participants reported that the above-mentioned physical benefits of TC translated into improved mobility and function in daily activities (e.g. stair-climbing, walking, getting up from a seated position, and doing household chores). It was interesting to note that in contrast to the current body of health research literature on TC, falls and balance were among the lesser-mentioned benefits, among this particular group of older adult TC practitioners. Possible explanations for this finding are addressed later, in the discussion.

Aggregate Data

The data gleaned from written respondents (see Appendices K and L) supplemented the study findings in the following ways: 1) they demonstrated how both the presence and predominance of certain experiences could vary from group to group, and 2) the data also provided support that frequently mentioned findings are likely to emerge from one group to another. Variation in experiences between groups of respondents is demonstrated in the two following examples: being an instructor was a common influence on TC continuation amongst written respondents that was absent from interview participants' data; having a greater appreciation for nature appeared as an idiosyncratic outcome of TC within the study sample, but as a common outcome amongst written respondents. Common features of TC experience amongst interview participants, such as witnessing TC as a factor TC initiation, feeling good as a motivation for TC continuation, altered awareness as a lived experience of TC, and improved circulation, emotional balance, and reduced pain as perceived outcomes of TC practise were also shared amongst the TC practitioners who responded in writing, thus supporting the position that the most commonly-mentioned features of TC experience are likely to emerge across similar groups of TC practitioners.

Chapter 5. Discussion

Overview

The purpose of this study was to understand and describe (from a well-being perspective) Tai Chi as experienced by older adults committed to regular practice. The four research questions informing the topic of TC experience were:

1. What motivates initiation of Tai Chi practise?
2. What motivates continuation of Tai Chi practise?
3. What is the lived experience of Tai Chi practise?
4. What are perceived outcomes of Tai Chi practise?

A phenomenological approach was taken to explore these questions, and involved the use of in-depth, semi-structured interviews with eight TC practitioners. Thematic analysis and numerically-aided phenomenological principles were employed to analyze data within and between participants. This process resulted in a profile of essential, common, and unique experiences of TC. First will be a meta-discussion of the findings. Next, essential experiences and most common experiences (those voiced by greater than half the participants), as well as some specific less common experiences (those voiced by half or less of participants) will be discussed with respect to their fit with relevant, current literature, organized by research question. Following this, strengths and limitations of the study will be addressed. Lastly, comments will be made regarding the practical impact of the study and findings, in terms of implications and recommendations.

Meta-Discussion

Looking back over the results and the process by which they came about, generated a number of overall impressions. With regards to the study's methodology, the process of data collection, organization, and analysis was extremely time-consuming and energy intensive, suggesting reasons for a lack of similar, corroborating, research in the past. However, there was a positive response from both study participants and written respondents (in terms of volunteering, continuing with the study from beginning to end, taking time to review and provide feedback on their data, or return detailed written responses further suggesting that they were interested in the topic, and that they did not perceive the data collection as onerous. Participants seemed willing to talk, and in fact, some said they were surprised that they had so much to say. They commented that the in-depth nature of the interview questions made them really think about what they were doing, suggesting that they do not generally examine their reasons for engaging in this activity and their experiences of it. Thus, it appears that participants took on the study with enthusiasm and that they provided thoughtful, detailed responses. Furthermore, some participants later spoke to other practitioners not involved in the study to validate their experiences, suggesting that they were curious about whether their experiences were unique or shared among other TC practitioners.

As expected, most participants' responses confirmed that the four research questions were intimately interrelated – motivation to continue TC practise was influenced by lived experience and perceived outcomes of TC, and some perceived outcomes of TC were extensions of lived experience. The research questions regarding initiation, continuation, lived experience, and perceived outcomes were assumed to be facets of a larger TC experience, not mutually exclusive entities; they were separated only for the purposes of information management.

Participants spoke about TC's impact on multiple facets of health, confirming the researcher's initial assumption that there was more to the TC experience than conventional biomedical outcomes and that there is a broad range of possibilities for further TC exploration that have yet to be addressed in health research on TC.

Taken together, this information suggests that: 1) the topic of research was of interest to the TC participants, and 2) the study approach, while time-consuming, was appropriate to the research topic, and generated new information and insights into the phenomenon of TC. Findings supported the positioning of a phenomenological approach on par with traditionally accepted objective measures for TC research, as this approach yielded different, equally valuable data, thus validating initial motivations for undertaking this study.

What Motivates Initiation of Tai Chi Practise?

The primary influences on TC initiation were: seeing TC in action, seeing an advertisement for a TC class, and convenient location of the TC class.
Interestingly, none of these primary influences overlapped with findings from Gavin's (2001) profile of 158 older adult community TC practitioners in which physical fitness, physical and mental heath-benefits, friendship/social reasons, fun/enjoyment, perception that TC is gentle and relaxing, interest in learning a new activity were reported as the main reasons for joining TC. That being said, some of the less common factors, such as believing that TC would not be hard on the body, wanting to be physically active and believing TC would be beneficial for health mentioned by the current study's participants overlapped with Gavin's findings above.

Differences in responses regarding reasons for joining TC may be due to differences in the samples and in methodology. Firstly, Gavin's sample was comprised of predominantly novice or relatively new practitioners (even some of the 20% who were considered experienced TC practitioners had as little as 10 weeks experience), while the present study comprised practitioners with at least 4 years of TC experience. Secondly, Gavin used written surveys and brief phone interviews to collect data, compared to this study's in-depth interview format. As well, the questions were worded differently for each study. Lastly, the time delay between initiating TC and participating in the study differed for each study, ranging from as short as one day in Gavin's sample, to as long as 11 years for one participant in the current study. The possibility that time delay as well as the influence of later experiences over time may have altered participants' recall of events preceding TC initiation is supported by the variation in responses observed between the initial survey and the follow-up phone interview 14 weeks later in Gavin's study. Three of the five reasons for joining TC initially (physical fitness, social and enjoyment) were not mentioned during follow-up, and were replaced by two reasons (appeal of TC as gentle and relaxing, and interest in learning a new activity) unmentioned initially. This finding simply reinforces the need to collect data on motives for initiation as early as possible.

An interesting finding was the role of aesthetics as a motivator for TC initiation for study participants in TC. Four of the five participants who talked about their experience of seeing TC identified its aesthetic qualities as making a strong impression on them, as in the description below:

> "...watching these people move in a set together...I like the slowness of tc, um, and the moving in unison....And I said to (my husband), 'I'd like to try this' [4.1.165-174]

Aesthetics is not currently included in models of motivation for health behaviour (just mentioned in passing in theory of intrinsic motivation – Ryan and Deci, 2000), so this finding appears to expand on traditional influences on health practise initiation.

Clearly no one factor is responsible for initiation of TC, however the present data suggest that previously uninvestigated factors such as aesthetics and location of class are important. While it may seem obvious that location is a factor, this is a factor that is nevertheless often ignored in the marketing of physical activity programs for older adults, which commonly ask the participants to travel to a remote location instead of bringing the activity to the participants.

What Motivates Continuation of TC Practise?

Most participants reported that feeling good after doing TC, enjoying this activity, feeling a sense of community, and finding TC challenging and interesting to learn influenced their continuation of TC practise. Csikszentmihalyi (1990) and Ryan and Deci (2000) both describe three of these four influences as characteristics of intrinsic motivation. Intrinsically-motivating activities share the qualities of being fun, enjoyable, interesting tasks that provide an opportunity to use and extend one's capacities, resulting in a sense of well-being. While feeling a sense of community was not a characteristic of intrinsically motivating activities, Ryan and Deci (2000) proposed that relatedness or feeling a sense of connectedness between oneself and others plays a role in facilitating the internalization of extrinsically-motivated activities. Certainly, the findings in this study seem to support the position that TC practise has become an intrinsically-motivating activity for a number of study participants and provides associated benefits (such as socialization) that increase the value of continued engagement in TC.

A construct related to intrinsic motivation that participants did *not* directly comment on is how confident they were that TC practise was within their capabilities (self-efficacy). Improvements in self-efficacy appear to play a significant role in TC adherence for novice practitioners (Li, McAuley et al., 2001) who are familiarizing themselves with the TC moves and striving to learn a TC set in its entirety. The significance of self-efficacy for novices is supported by the statement, "I had some idea of accomplishment – I can do it with a certain amount of flowing" made by one of the eight practitioners in the current study, as he recalled reasons for continuing with TC in his first year of practise. However, the experienced TC practitioners in the current study were already familiar with the TC moves, so feelings of efficacy for doing TC may no longer be as strong a motivator as other factors. Certainly, participants stated that refining their performance of the TC moves (i.e. increasing actual competence in TC) motivated them to continue, but none specifically talked about their confidence in being able to execute the TC moves as a reason for continuing to practise presently (The reader is reminded that participants in the current study were asked what it was about TC that influenced their continuation presently, rather than to recall what it was that influenced them to persist with TC as novices). This finding supports the idea that different motivating factors may play greater or lesser roles at various points in time within the practise of TC. Another, possibly related explanation, is that participants simply do not spontaneously report SE beliefs. Gavin's (2001) findings support this assumption, as participants in her study rated their self-efficacy for TC in response to a specific question, but did not refer to self-efficacy for TC on open-ended questioning. In the case of the current study, however, this may indicate that this construct is either not perceived by participants as an important influence for continuing TC practise, raising the issue of the role of self-efficacy in researchers' theories versus participants' experiences of motivating factors for activity continuation, or it may simply be that, given participants' advanced level of TC experience, feelings of efficacy for TC practise were taken for granted and therefore went unmentioned by these individuals.

One of the problems traditionally facing health activity adherence is a high dropout rate. One of the researcher's goals in describing the TC experience of the eight older adult TC practitioners who participated in the study was to find what they valued about this particular activity enough to stay with it, in the hope that the factors responsible could be identified and applied to programming or research on TC or indeed to other active living pursuits. The in-depth method of inquiry in this study found nothing to suggest that there were novel factors additional to those suggested by previous research into physical activity continuation; multiple motivating factors were reported for TC continuation, including influences from other domains of experience (such as lived experience and perceived outcomes). This simply underscored the complexity of human experience and the reasons why it would be unrealistic to try to identify a single key motivational factor for this particular health behaviour.

What is the Lived Experience of TC Practise?

The most common lived experiences participants described were: concentrating on the TC movements, paying attention to bodily sensations, as well as experiencing a sense of relaxation and detachment during TC practise. Some less common, but interesting, sensations included feeling that 'the TC moves come automatically' and feeling like one's body is 'part of a flow'.

The only essential experience of TC reported by the study participants was a sense of detachment. Many participants experienced detachment from thoughts and environmental sights and sounds during TC practise. Some felt detached from bodily sensations, and some experienced an altered sense of time. A number of participants reported that the feeling of detachment varied in frequency and intensity from practise to practise, and that it depended upon knowing the TC set well.

These lived experiences of TC practise are similar to the concept of "flow," described by Csikszentmihalyi (1990; Jackson & Csikszentmihalyi, 1999) as a state of total concentration on a task, such that there is no attentional capacity left for thoughts, emotions, or environmental stimuli irrelevant to the task at hand. Csikszentmihalyi described how, for some people in flow states, movements become almost automatic, and their sense of time seems distorted (either accelerated or slowed down). The flow concept provides an explanation for the apparent juxtaposition of increased awareness and detachment, associated with TC practise. The conditions necessary for flow to occur are two-fold: the activity provides clear goals and feedback, and provides an optimal balance of skills and challenge. Flow experiences lead to a deep sense of enjoyment that is so powerful that the individual is drawn to repeatedly engage in the activity that led to the flow experience.

Interestingly, TC practitioners in the current study talked about "concentrating on where I am in the TC set and executing the moves properly", "TC has an appeal in terms of being always challenging and interesting to learn – you never learn it completely", and almost all participants voiced, "I know that what takes me there is that I enjoy it', some of them stating specifically that they look forward to practising because "there's just a number of moves in there I just like doing" and "it's not just for the exercise, it's just for doin' it". It appears that TC, for the practitioners in the current study, appeared to present a rewarding challenge that never reaches closure, thereby allowing them to continually apply and develop skills. The practise itself promotes a sense of deep concentration and detachment, resulting in an enjoyable experience for that draws these practitioners back again and again. Although the researcher was not intentionally looking to fit TC experience into a particular theoretical framework, the findings in the current study exemplify key features described in Csikszentmihalyi's work on flow theory, and it is the researcher's position that TC can be considered an example of a flow activity.

Overlaps exist between the flow concept and meditative experiences. In his book entitled "Zen and the Brain" (Austin, 2000) Austin states that during deep concentration and meditation states, individuals experience a disappearance of thoughts and sensations, reduced awareness of their internal or external environment, an altered sense of time, place, self, or sensation, lasting seconds to minutes, after which they may feel tranquil, refreshed, and clearer-thinking. Not surprisingly, the practise of TC is historically intertwined with meditation. While the meditative component is not emphasized in all TC classes, some of its principles, such as deep concentration, moving with intention, and breathing techniques are ingrained in the practise of TC. Therefore, it is not surprising to see overlaps between the sensations experienced by the study participants during TC practise and those documented regarding meditation. Interestingly, Csikszentmihalyi (1990) considers practises such as Buddhist meditation, Yoga, and Taoist-influenced martial arts (TC being one) that focus on developing concentration and mind/body unity, as specific methods of producing the flow experience. Certainly, the descriptions of both flow and meditation appear to fit well with the experiences shared by the TC practitioners in this study.

These findings are significant for two reasons: First, they suggest that these participants' lived experiences of TC practise correspond to key features of flow experiences. Csikszentmihalyi stated that the result of a flow experience is a sense of enjoyment and deep satisfaction so powerful that individuals are motivated to seek it out repeatedly; referring back to the previous section, enjoyment and feeling good after TC were among the most commonly reported motivations for continuation of TC, further supporting the idea that TC is a flow activity, and as such, intrinsically motivating. Secondly, findings further suggest that TC offers more than merely physical exercise and as such demands more sensitive treatment in its research and promotion.

What are the Perceived Outcomes of TC Practise?

Many participants talked about an interrelationship between mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being when they described the ways in which TC has benefited them. The most common benefits mentioned by participants were relaxation and stress management, pain reduction, and improvements in circulation. Some less common perceived benefits of TC that will be discussed in this section were its effects on memory, mood, and functional ability. Overall, the current study's TC participants made very similar comments to Stathi and colleagues' (Stathi, Fox, & McKenna, 2002) physical activity study participants regarding the positive role TC plays in physical and mental health, through maintaining functional mobility and independence, relaxation and stress reduction, positive mental outlook, and memory. However, what Stathi et al revealed that was not mentioned by TC participants in the present study, was that physical activity increased individuals' sense of autonomy and feelings of achievement. However, a few TC participants mentioned, "doing TC has provided me with more self-confidence" and linked this statement to dealing more effectively with stressful situations day to day (e.g. being more assertive). Perhaps this could be interpreted as increased global sense of autonomy.

Participants reported improvements in relaxation, and in coping behaviours such as: considering stressors more often before reacting to them, not letting stressful situations bother them as much, and using TC practise to distract them from stressful thoughts. Relaxation and stress-coping behaviours are areas that have not really been considered in the current research literature on TC – as mentioned in the review of the literature, studies of TC and mood focus chiefly on TC's effects on negative mood and use measures of depression, anxiety and anger (Jin, 1989; Ross & Presswalla, 1998; Wolf et al., 1996). The findings on emotional balance and stress management obtained in the present study again link to the current meditation literature. Easterlin and Cardena (1998) found that experienced meditators have higher acceptance in the face of stressful situations, and more positive mood overall, compared to more novice meditators. As well, with experienced meditators the characteristic of acceptance is relatively stable even when potentially stressful situations increase in intensity.

Participants' experiences that TC reduces pain and bodily soreness both support and extend Ross et al's (1999) pilot study findings that TC practise is associated with reductions in self-rated pain. In contrast to Ross and colleagues' study participants who were novice practitioners who completed only 18 TC sessions, the current study's participants, with several years' TC experience, were able to comment on outcomes of long-term TC practise. A number of individuals in the current study found that pain and discomfort from arthritis, diverticulitis, and migraine headaches had improved to the extent that these conditions could be managed with less medication, or, in one person's case, completely resolved. One participant (Anne) reported that after practising TC regularly she felt less stressed, resulting in less pain. This may be indicative that, for some, TC's effect on pain reduction may be mediated by TC's influence on relaxation and stress coping. The authors Easterlin and Cardena (1998) believe that the characteristic of acceptance, mentioned above, is key in therapeutic progress for pain management. As well, Walsh (1999) found evidence for the position that regular practise of meditation can potentiate the effect of medications for chronic pain control, thus resulting in effectiveness of the drugs at reduced dosages.

Circulatory benefits reported by participants were variable but included better blood pressure control, better circulation to feet, hands, and head, clearer vision, better stamina and more rapid return of heart rate to resting levels after exercise. These findings extend the association between TC practise and reductions in hypertension reported in cardiovascular research on TC for individuals post-heart attack (Channer et al., 1996). They also lead this researcher to wonder about the possible role of TC in the control of chronic hypertension, and in the maintenance of normal blood pressure levels throughout the aging process. Interestingly, a number of participants referred to benefits in circulation in terms of warmth in hands and feet, eyes feeling brighter and more focused, and less likelihood of slight headaches – all symptoms that could relate to small vessel circulation. These findings support initial data on enhanced microcirculation in long term TC practitioners compared to sedentary controls (Wang, Lan, & Wong, 2001). On a related note, a recent study found that relaxation training significantly improved peripheral circulation to lower extremities, promoting foot ulcer healing (Rice, Alan, Schindler, & Dixon, 2001), but no further related studies involving TC were located.

Some less common perceived benefits of TC deserve to be noted as they present interesting possibilities for future research. These were perceived effects on memory, mood, and functional ability. Participants attributed improved retention and recall of factual and sequential information (i.e., computer operation procedures, a driving route, current events) to learning and recalling the sequence of TC moves. Interestingly, Kutner et al's (1997) TC participants' also reported cognitive changes after 15 weeks of TC practise; they felt more mentally alert and focused. Cognitive improvement in older adults is said to be task-specific and related to aerobic exercise (Boutcher, 2000; Ericsson, 2000). However, participants in the current study reported improvements in cognitive activities unrelated to TC, suggesting the potential for more generalized benefit at a lower exercise intensity, begging the question of whether cognitive benefit is attributable to characteristics of TC other than physical activity (such as its meditative, relaxation, and cognitive components).

In terms of mood, participants found that TC promotes "emotional balance" and their reports suggest that TC has immediate positive effects on mood, as well as mood stabilization over time. Most studies of TC and mood used measures of predominantly negative affect/mood; the only study that specifically used positive affect/mood scales (Li et al, 2001) found that three to six months of TC practise was associated with improvements in psychological well-being and positive affect. No prospective, long term studies have been done to explore trait changes in mood.

In terms of functional ability, a number of participants identified TC as helpful for their general mobility (particularly stair-climbing) and performance of daily household activities. This finding supports Li, Harmer, et al's (2001) statement that TC improves self-rated physical function in activities of daily living The functional impact of TC practise has yet to be confirmed by pre and post measures of actual performance of mobility and daily living tasks.

It should be noted that although there has been a great deal of interest in TC's role in falls research, this area was identified by only two of the eight study participants, and was overshadowed by numerous other benefits of TC even in this small sample of practitioners. One reason for this may be that many of the TC practitioners in this study were relatively young seniors (under 65 years old), and despite their physical health conditions, they were all independent in mobility, so balance may not have been as significant an issue as other health factors for this particular group. Another possibility could be that falls prevention is not the reason why older adults join this activity.

There were strong parallels between the experiences of the older adult TC practitioners in the current study and other qualitative research on physical activity and well-being (Stathi et al., 2002). Stathi et al found evidence that well-being is multidimensional in nature, that physical and mental health dimensions of well-being are interconnected, and that they are positively influenced by physical activity. From the findings it is evident that the TC practitioners in this study perceived TC as enhancing physical and mental health, supporting positive coping strategies, and improving day to day function, in addition its almost exclusively studied efficacy in reducing negative health experiences.

Strengths & Limitations of the Research

Strengths. Rigor in qualitative research involves making sure that what was done and why it was done is well explained (Steeves, 2000). A major strength of this study was that all procedures and findings were made visible through detailed documentation. Terms and procedures were clearly defined and illustrated. Data was organized at meaning unit, paraphrase, and statement levels, allowing easy reference to the supporting text at any level of analysis. A numerical referencing system ensured that reduced data could be cross-checked against its original source. Formalizing counts of experiences made it evident which findings constituted essential, common, and unique experiences of TC.

Staying faithful to the participants' own words minimized the likelihood of imputing incorrect meanings to findings. Participants were given numerous opportunities and encouragement to edit their responses for clarity, correctness, and confidentiality through phases of data collection and analyses. The procedures used at each stage of analysis (e.g., paraphrase and meaning unit generation) meant that participants' actual words were retained as much as possible and that the meaning of responses was preserved. Upon reviewing their summary data, participants commented that they had no, or minor corrections, thus confirming the accuracy of the data.

Limitations As expected, this study produced many learnings regarding the process by which this topic was explored. Main limitations in the study involved sample size and composition, and consideration needs to be given to the consequences of using the analytical method selected by the researcher. The proposed study had a small number of participants. This was consistent with the purpose of performing an in-depth inquiry into their personal experience of the phenomenon of Tai Chi, limiting the transferability of findings to other groups or settings. Certainly, both the presence and predominance of findings varied when study participants data were compared to aggregate data from written respondents. However, the comparison also demonstrated that the most common findings (such as witnessing TC as a factor in initiating TC practise and experiencing a sense of detachment during TC practise) amongst study participants were also shared experiences amongst written respondents, thus providing some indication of consistency across similar groups of older adult TC practitioners. This supports the assumption that frequently mentioned experiences are likely to emerge across similar groups. Therefore, although the results of this study may not be generalizable, the patterns of TC experiences that emerged hint at which factors are likely to present themselves if the study was replicated. The findings can also be a useful guide in terms of which factors to attend to in future TC programming and research activities.

In terms of limitations in sample composition, participants were all Caucasian, and highly educated. Many were under 65 years of age, representing younger seniors, and all participants had learned TC in Canada. The influence of factors such as ethnicity, social status, and age, and culture on the experience of Tai Chi was not a focus of this study but would be appropriate to explore in future research. In reality, TC practise can be offered at a minimal cost (Li, Duncan et al., 2001), so could be made widely available, if teaching resources were present, but what is not known is whether some of the experiences will differ depending on the day to day challenges being faced. With respect to cultural factors, Walsh (1999) discussed the predominance of partial practise of Asian contemplative disciplines in Western cultures. It is also important to remember that study participants were long term, committed, TC practitioners – experiences may differ with novice practitioners, in any or all domains of TC experience.

Finally, two points need to be made regarding consequences of the analytic methods employed in this study. Firstly, as the focus of this phenomenological study was to describe shared experiences of TC, unique or idiosyncratic experiences (i.e., those voiced by a single participant), although captured in the analytic process, were not discussed. Secondly, the findings, although founded on participants' actual statements of experience, were displayed in such a way that they did not make readily apparent the rich and colourful narratives from which they were derived, narratives which were the result of many hours of in-depth discussion with each participant. That being said, the analytic processes necessitated the preservation of data, not only at each level of reduction, but also in its raw form (i.e., transcripts), so these narratives are readily available to the reader. The reader is thus encouraged to peruse the transcripts (see Appendix E) to gain a fuller picture of each individual in context, and his or her unique perspective of the TC experience.

Implications & Recommendations for Future Research

In light of the findings on initiation, it appears that a TC demonstration at locations accessed by seniors (e.g. in malls, bingo halls, hospitals, seniors' housing) could act as a powerful motivator to engage seniors in TC, not only through its influence on traditional outcome expectancies (i.e., seeing TC as a low risk activity, with the potential for beneficial health effects), but also through its aesthetic appeal for some individuals. Although other activities such as dance and figure skating can be aesthetically pleasing to watch and perform, some may seem inaccessible to older adults if they perceive them as too difficult, costly, risky (because they are fast, or high impact) or require a companion (e.g. ballroom dancing). TC offers the opportunity to be a part of an aesthetic experience and is a relatively inexpensive, slow and gentle activity that does not require a partner. A practical implication for programmers or clinicians might therefore be to recognize that when employing traditional approaches such as advertisements, demonstrations, and verbal encouragement to motivate seniors to engage in TC, this activity should be promoted, not solely as physical activity, but also as an opportunity to be a part of an aesthetic experience. On a broader level, perhaps other physical activity programs would benefit from being promoted through public demonstrations. In terms of implications for future research, it would be interesting to know to what degree aesthetics plays a role in motivating seniors to engage in active living pursuits in general and might be best explored through a comparative study of a variety of activities (such as TC, yoga, various types of dancing, gymnastics).

Although it may seem obvious, classes (TC or any other activities for seniors) need to be offered at a convenient location. Convenient location was mentioned by most participants as an incentive for joining the TC class, yet many community fitness centers and some local seniors centres are not easily accessible except by car. If programmers expect older adults, who may have limitations in mobility or endurance, less options for transportation due to health or financial constraints, and who may have to travel alone to the class location, to get involved in organized physical activity it is essential to bring the programs and facilities closer to home.

The current study is the first one the researcher is aware of to explore motivating factors for TC continuation from a practitioner perspective. For long term practitioners, TC's appeal appears to be more subtle, in terms of providing the opportunity for ongoing refinement of the moves and experiencing enjoyable sensations as they practise TC. This prevents them from becoming bored with the activity and provides an enjoyable experience. Returning to Csikszentmihalyi's concept of flow, the enjoyment experienced while engaged in a task that is optimally challenging is, itself, a strong motivating factor for continuing the task. While for novice practitioners the risk for discontinuation may be if they feel overwhelmed, for experienced practitioners the risk is boredom. Thus there is a need to identify and plan activities that have long term sustainability in terms of to providing an optimal level of challenge across a spectrum of ability, making the experience enjoyable. Programmers need to focus also on associated incentives for activity continuation, such as providing opportunities for socialization and strengthening the community feeling (e.g. through tea breaks, social events, seasonal group activities), and development of leadership roles (e.g., teaching assistant, social coordinator, demonstration coordinator).

The findings on perceived outcomes of TC practise indicate that future investigations of TC should be directed toward stress coping and positive mood, pain perception, peripheral circulation, functional outcomes, and cognition, to round out its current weighting towards balance, cardiorespiratory function and negative mood indicators. Given that stress is considered a major issue facing society today, with its increasingly recognized deleterious effects on physical and mental health, a closer examination of TC's role on enhancing stress-resistance and stress-coping behaviours would be timely, but would require prospective, long-term study.

A number of participants in the current study's sample who had arthritis and perceived it to be beneficial (in conjunction with other treatment modalities) for pain management and functional performance of daily activities, therefore the impact of TC on arthritis should be examined more closely. This study's findings, as well as anecdotal reports by Dr. Paul Lam and arthritis program in Australia (Lam, 1998) certainly point positively in this direction.

It appears that TC, with its relaxation and circulatory effects has the potential contributing to the maintenance and/or improvement of small vessel circulation for practitioners. If so, TC would be making a valuable contribution to health promotion for older adults, where chronic conditions affecting small vessel circulation, such as diabetes, peripheral vascular disease, and arteriosclerosis predominate.

Given the close relationship between one's functional mobility and one's ability to perform self-care activities, and the impact of these two factors on independent living, this is an excellent area to focus upon in future research. If TC helps to maintain or improve functional mobility and independence in the broader population of older adults, this activity is relatively inexpensive and simple to implement (Li et al, 2001) and would be making an important contribution to the quality of life for older adults.

TC practise is described as requiring and building concentration, attention, control, mental intention, and motor planning (concentration on what moves come next and executing them properly), and experiencing a reduction in other thoughts, environmental distractions when practising TC (sustained attention), aspects of cognition related to executive functions of the frontal lobes, functions that are known to change over the course of normal aging as well as due to health conditions associated with aging. It would be interesting to map the areas of the brain stimulated during intensive TC practise to determine if TC has a role to play in the maintenance, rehabilitation, or enhancement of cognitive function.

On a broader scale, it would also be interesting to further explore participants' expectation of benefit when they first started TC, track the length of time it takes for participants to notice those benefits, and see how they rate the intensity of benefit, particularly in comparison to other activities. This could provide valuable information for active living program planning for older adults, in terms of refining the selection of specific activities based on the target population's needs/characteristics.

Summary

In summary, the researcher set out to describe the experience of TC from the perspective of older adult practitioner committed to regular TC practise. A phenomenological approach was used to explore motivation for initiation and continuation, lived experience of TC, and perceived outcomes of TC practise. This process resulted in a greater understanding of how the practitioners in this study started with TC practise and what it is about this activity that motivates their continued engagement. Rich descriptions of what these practitioners experience when they practise TC emerged. Additionally, participants shared their perceptions of how TC benefits them mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually. All four research questions comprising the phenomenon of TC experience were addressed, and the researcher was confident that participants believed their experiences of TC had been accurately represented thus confirming that the process used to elicit information about experiences of TC for this group of older adult practitioners was effective. The resulting portrait of the experience of TC for this group of older adult committed practitioners was as follows:

Many participants were attracted to TC after seeing this activity demonstrated, and sought out a class, or initiated TC after seeing it advertised, at a convenient location. Now that they have been practising for years, participants said that what continues to take them to TC is that they enjoy both the practise as well as the social aspects of TC, they feel good during and after TC, and they are continuing to learn and refine their TC practise. When practising TC, participants concentrate deeply on the movements, and experience a relaxing, detached state that provides some relief from day to day concerns and physical discomfort. Some of these feelings of relaxation persist even after TC practise and participants have noticed a more generalized effect over the long term – they are more relaxed overall, and they deal with potentially stressful situations more effectively. They also reported reduced perceptions of pain (particularly arthritic pain), and enhanced circulation. A number of participants said they felt that TC plays a positive role in improving their physical and mental health to the extent that they function better in daily activities

Although limited in generalizability, the essential and most common of these experiences are likely to be found across similar groups of TC practitioners. Findings have implications for programmers and researchers in terms of planning and promoting TC, and indeed, physical activity programs in general. Calling attention to the aesthetic aspect of TC, promoting programs through public demonstrations, and locating classes conveniently may motivate seniors to try activities. Identifying and planning activities that have long term sustainability in terms of remaining both challenging and enjoyable across a spectrum of expertise, and focusing on associated incentives such as providing opportunities for socialization, may influence activity continuation. Further exploration of TC's role in enhancing stress-coping behaviours, pain management, peripheral circulation, positive mood, functional outcomes, and cognition is recommended. Findings demonstrated that TC has become an integral part of the lives of the older adult practitioners in this study, who perceive this activity to be more than mere exercise – it is an optimally challenging experience for the promotion of well-being.

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Appendix A

Information Letter

Project Title: The Experience of Tai Chi for Older Adults Committed to Regular Practice

Researcher	**Supervisor**
Maria Tan, graduate student	Dr. Sandra OíBrien Cousins
Centre for Health Promotion Studies	Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation
University of Alberta 449-2024	University of Alberta 492-1033

Background& Purpose

Research on Tai Chi is quite new and little is known about why Tai Chi is important to some people. The purpose of this study is to understand what Tai Chi means to adults 55 years of age and over who practice Tai Chi regularly. You will be asked to talk about why you do Tai Chi, how you feel when you practice, and in what ways you think it benefits you. The information you provide will be used to complete a Masters of Science degree. It may also be used in presentations and published work.

Procedures & Confidentiality:

You will be interviewed three times over a two-week period. Each interview will last up to 90 minutes and will be audio taped with your permission. The tape will be transcribed (only the researcher will hear the tapes). Your participation and identity will be kept in complete confidence. Your name will not appear in any transcripts, publications or presentations. If you want your name to appear, please let the researcher know.

The tapes and typed interviews will be kept in a locked box at an office at the University of Alberta. Only the researcher and her supervisors will have access to them. The tapes and other information will be destroyed five years post-publication.

Benefits:

While you may not see direct benefits from the study, you will help to increase what is known about Tai Chi for older adults.

You will be asked if you would like to have a copy of your typed interview. If you have to make a special trip to do an interview, we will cover your travel costs.

Risks:

There are no expected physical or psychological risks to being in this study. If you have trouble sitting for the full interview, you may take a short break part way through.

Freedom to withdraw:

As a volunteer in the study, you may:

- refuse to answer any questions
- ask to stop the interview at any time
- drop out of the study without consequence and without explanation
- ask for things you said to be edited or removed at any point until the end of the last interview.

Additional contacts:

If you wish to speak to someone about this study, please call Dr. Wendy Rodgers, Chair of the Ethics Review Committee of the Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation, at 492-5910.

Appendix B

Background Information Sheet

Please tell me a bit about yourself.

Date of Birth: ____________

Please rate your overall health (circle one): Excellent Good Fair Poor

Current medical conditions: ____

Marital status (circle one): Married Separated Divorced Widowed Single

Occupation: ____

Years/country of education: ____

Country of birth/Ethnicity: ____

Please tell me about your Tai Chi background.

How many months/years have you practiced Tai Chi?

____

How many days do you practice Tai Chi per week?

____

Approximately how much total time (in minutes/hours) do you spend per day or per week doing Tai Chi?

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
Time spent							

Please name all the organizations where you currently do Tai Chi

____

Approximately how long have you been doing Tai Chi with each organization?

____

Did you ever do Tai Chi before joining the Tai Chi organization you are in now? _________

Leisure activity background

What other leisure and exercise activities do you currently do besides Tai Chi? How much time per week do you do each activity?

____

Do you do/have you done activities such as meditation, yoga, relaxation therapy, chi gong, or other martial arts? (Please describe)

____

Appendix C

Guiding Questions

Please think about these questions regarding your Tai Chi experience, in preparation for our interview sessions:

1. How did you get started with Tai Chi?
2. How would you describe Tai Chi to someone who had never seen it before?
3. What does it feel like to play Tai Chi? (How does your body feel, what is in your mind)
4. What difference has Tai Chi made in your life, compared to before you started practicing it?
5. What kind of effects do you believe Tai Chi has had on you? (Physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, etc)
6. Have you experienced any unexpected effects of Tai Chi?
7. What is it about Tai Chi that helps you to keep up with regular practise, even when you are busy?
8. How has Tai Chi kept your interest, even after learning a set several times?

Appendix D

Consent Form

Title of Project
The Experience of Tai Chi for Older Adults Committed to Regular Practice

Principal Investigator	Supervisor
Maria Tan	Dr. Sandra O'Brien Cousins
University of Alberta 492-8507	University of Alberta 492-1033

Do you understand that you have been asked to be in a research study?	Yes	No
Have you read and received a copy of the attached Information Sheet?	Yes	No
Do you understand the benefits and risks involved in taking part in this research study?	Yes	No
Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study?	Yes	No
Do you understand that you are free to refuse to participate, or to withdraw from the study at any time, without consequence, and that your information will be withdrawn at your request?	Yes	No
Has the issue of confidentiality been explained to you?	Yes	No
Do you understand who will have access to your information?	Yes	No

This study was explained to me by: ______________________________

I agree to take part in this study.

________________________	______________	______________________
Signature of Research Participant	Date	Witness
________________________		______________________
Printed Name		Printed Name

I believe that the person signing this form understands what is involved in the study and voluntarily agrees to participate.

________________________	______________
Signature of Investigator	Date

Appendix E

Interview Transcripts

C. (Participant ID#2)

Interview Transcript# 1

Date: Wednesday, August 22, 2001
Time: 12:30-13:35
Location: Interviewer's office – board room

INT- So this part in the Background information, if you can just tell me a little bit about yourself I'll just get your date of birth

C- January 29, 1942

INT- And would you rate your health as Excellent, Good, Fair, or Poor?

C- My health is excellent

INT- Do have any current medical conditions?

C- Yes, I have osteoporosis

INT- Anything else?

C- Nothing else

INT- Um, what would you consider your marital status?

C- Married

INT- And um, are you currently working?

C- I'm retired

INT- You're retired? Ok. Can you tell me a bit about your previous occupation?

C- I was a schoolteacher

INT- Alright. Um, how many years of education have you had – would you say, like have you had post-secondary education, then, I'm assuming?

C- Have to have had

INT- Yep

C- Um, teacher certification and a Bachelor of Arts with a major in English and History of Art, and Bachelor of Fine Arts with a major in painting and drawing. And I also, I also took art courses in London for a year, and had a studio in Goldsmiths College. And I took 2 summers at the Sorbonne in Paris, and studied at the school for teachers and students who wanted to learn French

INT- Could you tell me what your country of birth is

C- Canada

INT- I was just looking really briefly at your inventory here. Can you tell me a bit about how many months or years you've practiced tc?

C- yes

INT- relatively continuously

C- I took 2 courses in about the early 80's at the Extension department from someone called Victor, who was Malaysian, and I enjoyed it very much and practiced it for some time, and then let it go, gradually, and then eventually went back to it but it was a different style so I let it go – I didn't go beyond the 3rd lesson. And, um, about 5 years ago I saw a course advertised in the Grant MacEwan catalogue and registered for that and it was taught by Andy Wong. And I took a couple of courses from him and then he recommended that I go to study under Master Mak at the Chinese United Church [CUC]. And that was where I really began to practice TC with a certain intensity, but then I had already retired too, by the time I actually started to practice intensely. And that's the end of my answer.

INT- Right, OK. So you actually – your first experience with tc was in the 80's, is that right?

C- mm

INT- And then you mentioned a couple of different styles now, so the first experience, do you recall which style you took then?

C- No, Victor didn't give it a name.

INT- Oh ok

C- It was Victor's style

INT- Right

C- But it was no doubt and acceptable method if he had a job at the Extension department

INT- mhm

C- And I haven't seen him since, I don't know where he went or what he's doing

INT- Yeah, because I don't recall it being offered at the extension Centre for some time, actually.

C- It was when Corbett Hall was being used

INT- Yep. Before they renovated it probably

C- Yes, exactly. I have a classmate here at the Chinese United Church, who was with me in Victor's class

INT- mm, ok. Now they teach it at um at the-out of the Phys Ed building – they've got a couple of teachers now, so it's been taken – I guess it's been moved to the programs over there and offered to the public as well as to students

C- Good.

INT- OK, so you started in the 80's but where would you say – when would you say the more regular sort of continuous practice of tc occurred for you, like, in what year I guess?

C- Well it has to have been this most recent experience because I found that when I was teaching I'd get report cards coming at me in October and I would have to skip classes, and when you skip classes when you're studying tc it's devastating, and also, when you're really tired – when you work at, say, doing – if you do report card grades and comments, for, say, 100 students, and you have to have them out by a certain time, then you stay up late, and your concentration powers are diminished. And I found that I couldn't concentrate well enough during that time, obviously, to do tc properly.

INT- mhm

C- It's quite humbling, you know, everybody else is doing their movements and because you haven't been to class or you haven't practiced, or your tired, because the classes necessarily have to be in the evening, you just can't keep up with it, so you quit

INT- ok. And was that what you were finding when you were in the GMCC class? Is that right? I'm just trying to establish a bit of a time line.

C- ....It wasn't so bad there, but I noticed it a little bit, I managed to organize my life so that I could do it quite well. At one point - like everybody has different learning styles and you have to learn your own learning style, and I think your learning style changes over your life, throughout your life, and I found with Andy, at one point, he allowed me to sit at the back and write what the movements were because I wasn't learning all of the movements merely by practicing with the class – I had to write them down and see the list, and memorize the list so that I could (?)

INT- ok, alright, so that was really important for you, kind of getting that other type of reinforcement

C- And I haven't had to do that here at the CUC, uh, except at the very end of the tc movement series, because I missed that section last summer, and when you miss a section you never do learn – I, and I've heard from others – I never did learn it properly, so I have had to write down the sequence myself. Now the class gives us a list, of what the movements are, but they're all quite exotic names, like 'Diving into the Ocean for a Pearl', or...these exotic names that I can't bring meaning to – although that one is quite meaningful because you do – you bend down like that [demonstrates]. So, getting back to your question, the question is, what? Tell me again, repeat your question

INT- OK. Why don't we – like what I'd like to do is sort of establish a time line of how you've um practiced tc, basically, so, let's start with, maybe let's start with Andy's class. Um, how long did you – were you engaged in tc in Andy's class?

C- GMCC would have a class in the fall or spring or winter, and it would just be a piece of tc – it would be Tai Chi 1 or TCII, and I think once it was TCIII, but no one except 2 of us were going to take it so they had to cancel. So it was TC1 – and I took that, and TC2- I took that – I think I took TC2 twice, so, because I thought there might be more people coming for the next series of movements. And finally, Andy said just go to the CUC, and meet Master Mak, you'll be impressed, and you'll be able to go there all year round, except when it's 40 below.

INT- Right, you were telling me that that's the only time that they close the building usually.

C- Yeah. So that was an evening course, once a week, and Andy would get us to perform for him at the beginning of each class and it was sort of unnerving because, you know, if you didn't remember the last steps you were taught, you were looking around at your classmates to see what to do. So that was fairly continuous and I would practice at home. Um, but the people were always different, there was always a new group, and then a new group. So here it's the same people, more or less, you can go off on holidays sometimes, but you have a sense of continuity, and my energy isn't depleted by doing other things, I sort of let the tc be my focus for the week

INT- Ok, so you essentially went straight form the GMCC class to start with the CUC class. So how long have you been with them now?

C- 2 years

INT- OK, right,

C- Minus a month here to go to Europe, or a month there to, you know, with the holidays. If I'm in town, I'm here, twice a week.

INT- Right. And then I was noticing when you filled out this questionnaire on how many days a week you do tc it looks like you put in some time for it every single day, right?

C- mhm

INT- OK. Um, so is that practicing at home on your own? Or with a group?

C- No it's not with a group, it's in the living room or in the back yard, or yeah

INT- you sound very dedicated to keep it up everyday, in spite of the fact that most people tend to be quite busy with just the day-to-day life things that go on.

C- Well, if you're retired you don't have that kind of pressure

INT- Well, you did say that there's been a big difference for you /C – oh yes/ INT - since you retired, in terms of, I'm assuming, the amount of time you have as well as the amount of energy you've got

C- Yes

INT- Um, ...I also asked you in this questionnaire about some other activities that you do and um you mentioned that you do some walking and some weight lifting. Do you do, or have you done any other sort of activities that might be related to tc, such as Yoga, or any type of martial art or meditation, things like that?

C- I did take a course in yoga, and I enjoyed it, but I developed tennis elbow at the time, so I quit. I have an enormous respect for that tradition, I just haven't gone back to it. Um, I used to take dancing when I was a child, and gymnastics, things like Highland Fling, those things requiring learning a certain number of steps, and moving through them.

INT- Mm

C- Um, meditation, um....I would say that that was probably the biggest thing that shaped me as far as concentration goes. I started meditating, hm, I became aware of it in about '67, yeah, in about '67, I became aware of it but didn't practice it. Uh, I did start to practice it in uh, 1978, because I was in London for a year, and I went to 2 separate Ashrams in London – one was run by a Sri Lankan monk and the other one was organized by a Thai monk, who was actually an American who had left for the Vietnam war, lived in Thailand for 12 years, learned the language, and was appointed to uh, establish or, uh, work in London and in England in the context of the British Buddhist Association. So I would go on Sunday evenings to the Sri Lankan ashram, and there would be a meditation hour, and then tea afterwards, much like the tc tea. Uh, and I took some courses in meditation and Buddhist tradition. And meditated daily on my own at home, and then other evenings during the week, I would go to the Thai ashram and the same thing, more or less, would occur. There would be about an hour's meditation, with instruction during that time, like 'Stop fidgeting' (laughs) and how to actually engage in meditation – to follow your breath, how to relax into the pain that you might be feeling physically with the posture, with the lotus or the semi-lotus position

INT- Ok

C- Um, and how to live your life. So when I left England after that, I felt like I'd figured a few things out, and to come back here to the frontier, away from all of that, I felt that I could manage on my own. And I did. I don't meditate much anymore, but I still have my meditation bench, and um, I noticed that when things get tough, on those rare occasions when I – I feel- challenged, I will head for the meditation bench. It's not very often – I mean, I should do it everyday – Vipassana is what it's called – sitting meditation. I think it's a hugely valuable practice and certainly, in conjunction with tc, it would just be amazing, but I don't do it – I have other things – as you can see my days are-

INT- pretty full – yeah, ok. That's really interesting that you have that background. Yeah, I have heard about the Vipassana meditation, actually. Did you do both the sitting and the walking?

C- Um, very rarely walking, sitting mostly.

INT- That was the – was the focus in

C- In both places, the Sri Lankan and the Thai

INT- Oh, interesting. Um, So that's something that you've had for quite some time in your background actually. Can you tell me a little bit about how you it is that you came to um starting tc? Um, just think back and tell me a bit about what drew you to it in the first place.

C- Um, in England there was a Buddhist monk- I don't know where he was from, he could have been Thai- who was outside in his ochre robe, doing tc. And it was quite beautiful and the head monk said it's an excellent thing to combine with meditation. And at the time I...it registered but I didn't say well, 'eventually I'm going to take tc, too'....One never knows, you know it's it's as with teaching, you might teach something and look at the class and think, 'well I don't know if I've really taught them' and you don't get to see what the results of...always – I mean, they might pass the test but in the things that really matter it's hard to test them. You never know what you've sown will grow. You hope that the best you've sown will grow – you want to teach the good things. Uh, but they come back after a few years, and the person in the garden doing tc will never know the influence that he had. And I didn't know at the time either. I don't know who he was – he was just – he was doing tc.

INT- right

C- I assume that's where it comes from. Um, can't think of where else it might come from. Other than the fact that uh..I've been rather enchanted with – with the East in general, not to make it specific in any way, but, with the East in general, because I think...it's something that in the West we haven't really had enough of yet, we haven't really embraced it enough. And, I grew up in a village in BC um, where my classmates were Japanese Canadian, and there was an integration there – we would sleep over at each other's places and eat at each other's houses and such, go to each other's weddings, and birthdays, and funerals, and um...they were Buddhist – my best friend's mother was Buddhist, and at the time it only meant that in that room there was a shrine with oranges and rice cakes or something, and I didn't really – oh, and somebody's ashes – but it didn't really have much effect on me, other that the fact that we didn't have that in our house. Um, so I've always sort of felt that I'm – that I'm some kind of a bridge between 2 cultures and that part of my life is merely maintaining the bridge, between East and the West, somehow.

INT- OK

C- I guess that might be it

INT- Well, it sounds like you do have a deep interest in um, bridging the 2 from what I'm hearing, and you've got some background – you've had a chance to grow up with a bit of a mixture of cultures surrounding you. And then, did you – when you did hear about the Extension Centre's tc class, did you actually seek it out yourself? Or how did that come to be?

C- Well, one of the things I like to do – it sounds boring- but I like to know what courses are being given in a city. So when the catalogue comes, I generally flip through it just to see what they're offering in this city – what can people study if they want. And the Extension building at the time – Corbett Hall was a short walk from where I lived, and I had also taken art courses there at one time, and it seemed quite normal just to and take tc – I can't remember the impetus really

INT- OK

C- I think at the time too, I felt that it would be good for my classmate because she was – it struck me that she might benefit from something like that- I knew that she wouldn't ever be particularly interested in Vipassana – because she is um, she's Muslim, but the movement of tc is...more like a dance and she likes to dance, and I just thought the benefits of it might help her.

INT- OK

C- And she didn't continue after those 2 classes, but she's back again

INT- Right. You never know when /C- she said - /INT – you're going to connect again

C- She said to me, 'well I still don't – can't say I believe in tc', and I said, well I thought to myself, 'well one need not believe in it' because that's the word you use for a religion, 'you just practice it.' It's not 'here's a new religion and I want you to accept it', or something like that [laughs]. But then, this is her second language, so...

INT- Yeah, well, there is certainly different information about different levels of practicing tc I suppose, and maybe people interpret it in various ways.

C- Well curiously, I even heard it used – had it used by a British woman who said 'Do you believe in um [stop tape] She said 'do you believe in serendipity?' and I of course said 'yes' but what I really meant was 'I think I believe now, on second thought' – this was a long distance phone call so I didn't want to keep her [laughs] she was paying – it's not that you believe in it or don't believe in it, it either is or it isn't, in your mind, in your experience I guess, and it is in my experience that it occurs. But to believe in – I think 'do you believe in Allah, or do you believe in God, or do you believe in" I keep that phrase for religious discussion, I generally don't use it for other things.

INT- Right, ok

C- Now how did we get to that?

INT- Well, we were talking about how you and your peer eventually met up again at the CUC /C- because I told her to come /INT – Oh, you got her to come, I see. OK, and how tc can be seen on various levels as well. So how do you see tc in your life – like how do you – I guess, where do you place it?

C- ....Well, I suppose that I would have to say I started out doing it accepting that something good might come from it. And, other than the suffering that occurs when you realize that you don't remember the next step and you're in the middle of the floor and your teacher is watching you [laughs]. But the – having gone through the lessons and fairly regular home practice, I would have to say that at this stage of my life, it has improved my concentration skills and that...I can remember things clearly – more clearly than I might have if I were not doing it – and I can't explain that – physiologically I don't know how that happens. Certainly the Sword – doing the Sword from March until now of this year, has made me much more decisive, um, and a little aggressive, I have to admit – verbally aggressive – now, I don't mind stating my opinion when before, I might have just let things slide, or overlook something that I might find offensive, I'll now voice my offense. Um, probably it's more difficult to live with but it's more honest....what else – the benefits....I think that another of the benefits, curiously, I mean, I don't speak the language that this class is taught in, and so I have to watch the teacher and memorize the movements – that's all I have to go by. Uh, so it's a mystery to me as to how the benefits occur, uh....for example, if I'm, - I used to believe and (yeah, believe, that's the word again)- I used to think, that drinking a glass of wine a day, for example, would keep your cholesterol at a respectable level, and my cholesterol, although not dangerously high, was somewhat high, a few years ago, and so I would drink my glass of wine, and sometimes 2 glasses of wine, and I noticed when I started doing tc, that I had trouble balancing, and certainly when I was doing the Sword, I had trouble balancing- the next morning. If I had wine the night before, there were certain movements in tc that I was uncomfortable doing. So I thought, 'I'll try not drinking wine' and sure enough, it was better. I just happened to mention this to a girl who's a runner – she's a young woman who's a runner – um, with a certain feeling of 'well I don't know how she's going to take this' because she tends to be rather a pragmatist, and she might just feel that it's sort of, that 'she's being fanciful', but she said too, that if she drinks a glass of wine or a bottle of beer the night before she runs, she can't run as hard the next morning, and she understood what I was talking about, so I felt...uh, relieved in a way, that from someone who doesn't do tc, there is this reinforcement of the reaction. Cause you know sometimes you get an idea in your head and you don't know [laughs] whether it's just fancy or whether it's actually possible. And I haven't taken any medical courses – I – physiologically I'm an ignoramus, although the basic stuff...yeah, so tc taught me that consuming liquor influences my performance the following morning. Most recently – I mean, I wasn't addicted to wine or anything – I mean, I like it but I don't have to have it and I'm not suffering for not having it, and occasionally I do, with the predictable effect [laughs] I mean I don't fall down, I just don't like the feeling I have when I'm doing a few -

INT- Do you find – sorry to interrupt – do you find that that sensation of just not having the same type of balance /C- Control /INT- or control, um, do you experience that depending on what time after you drink? You know, what time the next day – morning versus evening

C- Morning

INT- OK

C- The morning after [both laugh]

INT- OK

C- So what else.... oh yes, most recently, uh, I was having a very fine day and then I discovered that I had tipped my bottle of ink – black ink- over, but unfortunately the lid had not been screwed on tightly, and it spilled on the tablecloth, so I, you know, I mopped it up and cleaned up, took it down to the washer and sprayed it and got it through the washer, and it doesn't look too – it was black ink – but I was really quite aggravated. And I let my coffee run over – you know, I filter my coffee, and I put a little too much water in and it was running over on the counter. So I'd spilled the ink and, and in the same hour the coffee ran over, and then I spilled my purse on the floor, and then later in the day, I smashed my finger in the car door, and I thought ' all of this is because, probably, too much coffee.' You know, it's making me move quickly, and it's making me erratic, and it's making me inordinately rushed or careless – I'm going to try quitting coffee. And I've quit and started and quit and started and quit and started often enough to know that the next day is a bad day if you don't have any coffee. And I was ready for it. And I had discovered in the past that if you're not going to drink coffee, you better drink green tea, or you're going to have just a terrible headache. So right away in the morning, I had a cup of green tea, and I didn't get my headache – and I've been off coffee now for a few days, it's been great. But, doing tc seems to help you make these observations about yourself, seems to make you – seems to help you resolve to do something about it, and it seems to help in the process of keeping the resolution...because it has that advantage, at least, seemingly, of making you be decisive...and strong. And that's a good feeling, feeling strong. You know, if you sort of sneak back to the coffee cup or the cupboard and pull out the filter and start boiling water for another cup, the day after you decide you're not going to, then you know, you feel weak, and sort of, not proud of yourself. So...I would say that tc has um...that's a very good advantage- as I perceive it, someone else might say 'that's hogwash, it's purely a physical advantage that you get, doing tc.' You know, your heartbeat is steady – what do they put in the papers – in the literature they say 'your blood pressure is fine" – yes my blood pressure is 100/70. 'Oh, your pulse is very regular' – well my pulse is 52. Or, you know 'your bones are going to all get really strong again' – well...that's hard to say if that's tc, or if it's the medication Fosamax, or, if it was Dr. Aung's acupuncture, or, I know, a lot of walking, because I used to live a very sedentary life, marking papers, doing watercolours, making lesson plans, not a lot of activity. So that's hard – that's hard to know – hard to test.

INT- So you had a change in your activity levels um – did all that come at once? Cause now you're walking and you're weightlifting and you're doing your tc

C- Yeah, it came all at once.

INT- It did.

C- I was – when I retired-just a month before I retired, I discovered that I had osteoporosis. That I had bones of a woman much older that I am. And I was appalled, because I've always prized good health, and I have always been healthy. And to be told that I had bones of a woman much older than I was, uh...scared me. And I sort of – I saw myself with a widow's hump, you know, and a broken bone, and a wheelchair, and nursing home, and and I though, 'Not me!' So, my husband found a book on weightlifting at the library and I immediately learned that – bought the weights and learned to do that at home. And followed her regime – Joyce ?Madraw weightlifting 'Bodybuilding Bones' –was it? 'Bone building Body shaping' something like that. Um, and I had intended to go to the- Master Mak's class anyway, as soon as I retired. I mean, when I went there briefly, the year before I retired, I knew that I couldn't incorporate the regime into my teaching, because Monday morning and Wednesday mornings I would be at school! You can't – you can't take the class. So I just postponed that, but when I retired and I had the weightlifting and immediately, um tc, and I decided to walk everyday, 30 minutes at least. And take Fosamax. I didn't take the hormone replacement with menopause, and when you don't take hormone replacement, you often do develop osteoporosis. And, I don't like medications, uh, I have to be really sick before I even take an Aspirin, and I'm so very rarely sick that I don't think I've taken an Aspirin in 5 years. Uh, I don't do injections, I don't do sleeping pills, I don't do wake up stuff, other than coffee and tea. Uh, but coffee's for the moment on the back shelf [laughs].

INT- What year did you retire?

C- '99

INT- '99, ok.

C- I've got lots and lots of questions. You've told me so much information, but I'm also aware of the time, cause I did promise you that this would be about an hour, so would it be alright with you if what we do we finish today, and then we'll pick up kind of where we left off and after I get a chance to sort of digest all that information, um, on Wednesday?

INT- Next Wednesday? I'm not in town.

C- Oh, You're not? Ok, I'm just going to stop the tape.

Addendum

Line 62- Well it has to have been this most recent experience since the summer of 1999, after I retired, because I found that when I was teaching I'd get report cards coming at me in October and I would have to skip classes, and when you skip tai chi classes when you're studying tc it's devastating

Line 81- I had to write them down and see the list, and memorize the list so that I could do them [the moves] alone at home

Line 85- when you miss a section you never do learn it properly without extra effort and attention

Line 189- And, I grew up in a village in BC um, where some of my classmates were Japanese-Canadian

Line 237- because I invited her to try a few lessons

Line 318- Just a year before I retired (1998), I discovered that I had osteoporosis.

Line 329- Teachers can't take the class.

Line 325- Joyce Vedral weightlifting 'Bone building Body shaping' something like that.

Line 330- but in June of 1998 I had the weightlifting and immediately, um tc, and I decided to walk everyday, 30 minutes at least.

C. (ID#2)

Interview Transcript #2

Date: August 27, 2001
Time: 14:30-15:35
Location: Interviewer's office - Boardroom

INT- OK, um, so just to recap what we talked a little bit about last, um, at the last interview, was um, a bit about your background, and also how you started in tc, and uh just wanted to check with you if you had anything else to add, I guess, that you thought of since last interview.

C- ....Nothing else to add except perhaps um, to say that in a couple of weeks I might also start to go to Andy Wong's class on Tuesday night for the Sword and for tc

INT- Oh ok, and that's at GMCC

C- No, he's teaching at the Jewish Community Centre, for everyone, it's not just for Jewish people

INT- Oh, ok, alright. Um, One thing I just wanted to clarify when I was taking a look over the interview from last week, was that you had mentioned that you had started, um, you had taken some classes at the Extension Centre then you had taken another class but you'd only stayed for a couple of sessions cause the style of tc was different, and then there seemed to be a long break between there and when you started at GMCC, is that - /C- that's correct /INT-there is – there was a big space. Um, what got you I guess, to restart after such a long break from tc? Anything in particular?

C- ...Uh, probably...at that time I had um started hormone replacement and then declined to take it because it caused blood clots in my fingers, and so I was dealing with all of the earmarks of menopause, and teaching, and raising 2 stepchildren, and I had quite a lot to do. And I think with all of that I decided that tc might help me see my way through. Also, GMCC is not very far from where we live.

INT- Oh, ok, so it's convenient?

C- Yes

INT- OK. Um, some of the other things that you touched on in the last interview were a bit about your background in meditation, and also the idea of tc as a practice rather than as a belief, and also you had started to mention some of the benefits of tc, and I thought that was really nice cause it all leads in really well to what I'd like to talk about today, and that's really about your personal lived experience of tc. Um, So if you don't mind, what I'd like to get you to do, um, first off, is, um if you could kind of describe to me or walk me through a typical practice session for you, uh tc practice session – what kind of things you do, and um – just so I can get a bit of a picture of how that works for you.

C- Do you mean, at the CUC, or at home?

INT- Um, can you do both?

C- Yes

INT- Alright, that would be really nice

C- Um, well, at CUC we – I arrive at about 9 o'clock for the Sword class, and I say 'Jo San' which is 'Good Morning' to everyone I meet, and they usually say 'Good Morning' back to me, and - they're starting to say 'Jo San' back to me, and a few of them are giving me other words to say, like 'Do Jeh' which means 'thank you' and 'Mah Jong' which means 'honey' because we make honey at the cottage, and so on. And then I change my shoes, uh, and I take my sword and I go into the gym for the Sword class, where the students are, and practice a bit before the class starts. But usually I will have practiced a bit also at home, so I 'm not totally out of touch with it. And then the teacher comes in, and she says

'Good morning' which is 'Jo San', and then she gets her sword ready and we get into formation – is this what you want to know?

INT- Yes, yeah, that's great

C- And um...we line up and I'm at the back of the class in the left hand corner, and I put my sword in its position [demonstrates with left hand] and I stand and wait for her to call the beginning of the movements. And then we...begin together, and we try to stay together which is sometimes a challenge, and um, we go through the routine – totally now because we've covered all of the moves, and the sun shines in the window and everything is quiet, and we're just doing our sword. And, we might do it 3 or 4 or 5 times, consecutively, and as we go along, we've been doing more, in fact going from 9:15 to 9:45 straight through. And everyone is perspiring and they're mopping their brows at the end of it. Uh, recently she has switched so that she goes around to the back of the class so that that puts me at the front on the right. And it has – it's very difficult to change after you've learned tc facing one direction, because all of your pointers and all of your visual cues are upset. So we're learning to do it indifferent directions now. And Master Mak comes in and also does a few of the rounds with us, and gives us some encouragement and some pointers on how to improve. And, we like to watch him do it too because he's very graceful, and very, uh...definite in what he does. And then at 9:45, we put away our swords and we go downstairs for a little bit of tea, and then we start the tc at 10 o'clock. And right now I'm learning from Lily, who is very adept at what she does, a very good teacher and uh, studying under her has made me want to be able to go through the whole routine entirely on my own without any assistance from anyone else. Um..since I learned it I've sort of been ?ringing? one part of it because I was absent for a whole summer last summer, and I missed a chunk of the lessons, so I was trying to make up just by following along, but I'm getting it – I've got it now. Um, we do 2 rounds, and at a certain point in the tc routine, I notice almost inevitably, I take a deep breath – not because I think about it and do it but because it just occurs. And, I know that we as a general rule, we don't breathe deeply enough, but at least in tc you can breathe deeply, profoundly, at least once per session, per round. Um, I'm not too terribly aware of everyone else in the class when I'm doing it, except my teacher, cause I like to gauge my speed according to hers, and since I quit coffee it's much easier to slow down – coffee makes me do things more rapidly. And there is again the music that we use for guidance and the Chinese words which I don't understand but I'm getting used to a few of the sounds for the steps. And um, I can be thrown off and distracted by someone coming into the room during a round...or by the proximity of someone who comes in and stands nearby. But that's my own problem, I have to work on that myself – it says something about my powers of concentration I guess. Um...it's great when the fans on inside – it's cold – it's awful when it's hot. And there are about – I don't know – maybe 30 people in that class. At 10:30 we stop and for the second round, and we go and have tea and biscuits, and we socialize and talk to people. Than we go back for one more session, and then we have been in the habit of going to lunch – a few of us – half a dozen at the very most, and have some Chinese food and talk about current events, and then we go home. And it's twice a week, it's Wednesdays and Fridays. When I practice at home...I do it in the morning, generally, for the first time, I do generally the Sword routine first, once, sometimes 3 times, and then I do tc- and this is after my weights – and it might be after breakfast too ____When I practice at home I do so in the living room, facing in the same direction. The ceiling isn't as high as the gym, so I have to be careful with the sword and if there's a vase of flowers I have to be careful not to decapitate them, but I managed so I can swing it fairly well in certain places between the sofa and the coffee table and the mantelpiece /INT- that's pretty good! / C- TC you don't have to be so careful, and I go through that routine, knowing that some mysterious good is being done for m, and that my respiration and my heart rate and my blood pressure, and maybe even my bones will be improved if I do this every day. Some days I go out on the lawn – back lawn – in the back garden and I do my sword back there, and that's the best because I can put up as high as I want and the apple trees don't mind if I snip off a few leaves. And at the cottage I do it outside cause that's the only place to do it, and that's good too – it's nice to do it in the open air. And that's how I do tc – once I did it the beach in Mexico, in January, but I noticed that I sort of felt self conscious at first, because there were people around me sunbathing, and some of them were standing up, here and there, and some of them were in the water – but I was the only one on the whole beach doing tc. And I didn't – that particular section that has given me some trouble because I missed the lessons last summer – gave me a great deal of trouble at that time and I found myself going on and on and not remembering exactly how to finish it, but it was a good experience. Sand is hard to move in – deep sand – nice sand but it's hard to do tc in. So I only did it once. But the sea is a good teacher – it's a good image to think.

INT- Oh that sounds – it sounds really nice, actually – like a nice experience doing it out there right in the middle elf nature. Um, you mentioned that when you were doing the sword in the class, that you'll repeat it several times over – I'm assuming then that the Sword takes less time than the tc pattern that you're doing currently, is that right – that it takes about 5 minutes or something – I'm sorry – about 9 minutes or something like that?

C- Mhm

INT- OK, You had mentioned that when you are practicing it, that it's all very quiet. Can you talk a bit about that?

C- Well, especially when we were learning it, it was quiet. Except from time to time the teacher will say something in Chinese...which might be – I expect it's the name of the move that she's saying – I should have brought the sheet for you. Uh..or she might say, 'twist the sword or twist the arm' in Chinese. There is that sound, but generally, when we were in the process of learning, it was quiet. And now we have music, Chinese music, which is quite pleasant, I enjoy it. And I like it when the sun shines in, it's quite a – it's very pleasant.

INT- So, as opposed to when you're actually practicing the tc down in the basement – that one- um, you have a tape with music, but not the actual names of the moves

C- No, no human voice,

INT- Oh, I see, Ok

C- Instrumentals. If I remember correctly

INT- ok, sure. Um, can you tell me a little bit about what sort of thoughts or sensations you're experiencing when you're actually doing either the sword or the tc pattern. What goes through your mind, or what are you feeling in your body, or emotionally, if anything?

C- .....Well, the main point in doing the Sword in tc, is to focus on the movements as you do them. And if you start thinking about other things you'll forget what to do, and it's very obvious, because you're standing there with everyone....It's sort of a total, a total..necessity to being mentally and physically in touch with what's going on and where you're supposed to be. Quite demanding, and as soon as you allow your mind to go off, you get lost, you don't know where you are – if you're in a group of people you just fit right back in but if you're alone, you have to start all over again. And....if I'm distracted – I was distracted by the news that, that I hadn't – my bones had not improved since this last year – I found that disturbing the first day, and one of the first things I did after the phone call, was go and do tc. But I didn't remember the routine, I just did it – I don't know if I did it correctly or not, because I was – I was distracted, and I just felt the movements were alleviating some of the distraction. And it didn't matter that I wasn't doing it correctly at that time, so maybe some of the sequences were wrong, for example. Um...sometimes, like once, Master Mak didn't arrive at the beginning of the class, and I found myself mildly distracted by that, thinking he might have had an accident on his way to the building, or – because he's very elderly – and I thought that perhaps he could even die alone, when he had given so much to rest of us, but he came in after awhile, and we were all – well I imagine that there was a sensation of relief, cause I'm sure I wasn't the only one who, who was concerned. And he just came in. And now he comes in a little late, often, so it doesn't matter so much now. So you can carry on and still be slightly distracted in the Sword. In tc, it's harder, it's just more demanding of concentration, I don't know why. For me...the actual sword itself, the object in my hand, I think is, an advantage, because I have been so much of my life with a pen or a paintbrush in my hand, and often when I'm writing, I don't have a sensation of writing so much as just the flow – I don't know if I can express that so well. The pen is merely a vehicle, and the language is merely a vehicle for what I'm about. You lose the sensation of the clumsy physical act, which – not clumsy – overt....like if you're really painting you forget that your really painting and you're ___ing and image, you're actually achieving some kind of goal that you set out to do – you forget that this thing in your hand is a tool, but it serves as a focus and the sword, in a way, serves a focus, for me. Uh, some people might say 'why do you need a sword' because it's an instrument of aggression, and in some cases, killing, and so on, but, I've been a pacifist so long I don' think I would want to use it for anything like that. I suppose in dealing with some of my own aggressive feelings – I'm angry or something – I can go out in the garden and do the Sword the way a tennis player might go to a court and whack away at the ball. But to use it just as a tool of focus, is a good thing. With tc the – everything is your own body [demonstrates hand movements and weight shifts in sitting] and your hands become the sword and your mind, eventually, you hope, becomes the sword, you know, one unit, one thing, given to achieving an end.

INT- So it's sort of the idea that of getting beyond the mechanics of holding a tool or implement/ C- the sword was very complex foe me, first /INT – oh really?

C- I missed that first lesson, too. And the thing – just to stand with it – I couldn't even just stand with it, or even hold it, because it didn't seem to sit in my hand [demonstrates starting position with left hand] with any, feeling of pleasure – now it's fine. And the movements are hard to get used to - you do the move that you've been shown, and then you look back over your shoulder and check them out again to see what ______– try again. And sometimes you think you have it, but don't, and the teacher will come along and say 'this is better, this you can practice on; watch me' or like that. So thought, sensations, you asked about.....the negative – the only negative sensation I have in the tc routine is if I had a glass of wine the night before, I don't balance as well can usually, and that's that's a disagreeable sensation. I have to correct what I said just a minute ago about achieving an end. And perhaps that's part of the beauty of tc is that you're not only – I don't want to say you are achieving an end, but that you kind of achieve the means and the ends simultaneously. Because tc is a series of – of moves, or ends, and you perform them in order to achieve an end we are not fully cognizant of, I think, but we do it because we enjoy it, because someone said it was good for us.

INT- So why do you do it?

C- Well, both of those – So I did a back flip there because I wanted to correct that particular word. So you asked about thoughts and sensations, and I've given you thoughts, not so much the sensations, I guess. There's never any pain, except, physically, a kind of tennis elbow, tennis wrist, tennis shoulder, sore on occasion. Because if you practice 3 times a day, which, when I was learning it, I was ________.

INT- You had mentioned that, wasn't it before, that you had actually had tennis elbow, when you were doing yoga or something like that, right? So that's not a foreign /C-no /-INT problem for you. Ok, when I was asking about sensations, um, the reason I asked was that sometimes people find that they are aware of sounds, feelings in their body, um, that sort of thing, when they're doing any type of activity, you know? And sometimes people find that those sensations are heightened and so that's why I thought I'd ask you, just to to find out whether or not you notice – for example, you had mentioned that about halfway through your tc pattern, you notice that you take this deep breath all of a sudden, and I thought that was really interesting. Um, and uh...that it happens right in the middle and why you think that might be?

C- Well, it might be because everything is being aligned and because the circulation is beginning to strengthen and there may be a certain threshold that has arrived at....there is a relief, and the relief is expressed as a sort of a big sigh, a big breath, a sense of well-being, at last you've achieved some maximum level of, of well-being. In Vipassana, there's a, a curious sensation, I don't remember if I told you last time or not, it's a purely physical, visual thing, I have noticed – that the morning, the day after I have meditated – sitting meditation – my visual acuity is increased. The colours are truer, the objects are somehow – I appreciate them more, and the light/dark, the value, tonality is is more distinct. Everything seems more vibrant visually. It's enough to make you want to do it every, every evening. Though I don't – but not – I haven't noticed the same thing with tc – it may be more gradual, I don't know.

INT- Interesting. In the last interview, you had also mentioned about – you had talked a bit about your experience with meditation and at one point you had actually mentioned that you thought that tc and meditation basically complement each other nicely. Can you talk a bit about that – just explain what you meant by that?

C- Those were not my original words, those were the words of the head monk, but, I - I would have to agree that sitting meditation performs...a similar calming and a lining up of thought processes , rather than a jamming [demonstrates with fist and hand] of thought processes whereby you feel like you're getting bombarded by all of the things you have to do, or whatever your concerned about. Vipassana does for you intellectually and emotionally, perhaps, you could say, what tc does for you emotionally and physically. Now I might be talking through my hat here, they may both do the same things, just with a different procedure – I'm not an authority , you know – I haven't read anything to back up what I say, but I do know from experience that Vipassana...however it happens – I have no idea – causes everything to seem manageable. In the past when I've had a heavy load of work to do, report cards, lesson plans, and children at home, the usual baggage – I would notice that I might be feeling distraught with all that has to be done, not knowing where to start first – the sheer weight of it and the deadlines and that kind of thing. If I would do the opposite of what I was inclined to do – I would be inclined to sit down and frantically get started, say, at report cards because I had 100 or 200 to do, with comments, in various subjects, and grades, and exams, and marking and so on – or if I should just go and sit on my meditation bench – which is contrary to what most people probably would think were not to do – one would say ‘ shouldn't you just get at it and get it done? Why would you want to go and sit down and avoid it?' But when you go and sit down in this position, even for 15 minutes, and you try to calm your mind just by counting the breaths that go in and go out, and not – and putting everything else aside, you come out of it feeling you can actually handle the whole thing in a calm way. And it's really quite remarkable/ I'm not talking about this in order to flog any religion, it's merely one of the amazing things that I have dis – well I wouldn't say I have discovered, but that I have been taught to do, for whatever reason, this how it affects me, and it's valuable. TC, on the other hand, when you forget the step it's so obvious that it's embarrassing, and so you might not be wanting to go to tc as much as you might want to sit on the meditation bench cause then your distractions are not so obvious.

INT- Right, ok. Have you , in your personal experience come to see some similarities between doing your meditation and doing tc?

C- They both require concentration, and if you're going to get benefit from it, you need to do it regularly....and you need to sacrifice some of the things of the so-called 'good life' if they interfere with your ability to focus or balance....And you learn how to sacrifice too. I think that – I would say that....it's interesting – when I discovered that I wasn't able to balance when I started the sword, as well as I wanted to, I just, just decided myself that I would not drink wine the night before – I was drinking wine because apparently one glass keeps cholesterol down, and that was presumably the reason. But I noticed that I didn't miss it, and didn't even want it, didn't even enjoy it on the occasions when I was socially required to have some. And I think that whatever the discipline involves, it helps you make decision and keep them more solidly than you would if you weren't doing it. And I don't understand that either.

INT- But it is in your experience

C- mhm

INT- OK. Um...I think what I read from reading over your interview last week, was that um, there is certainly an element of concentration involved in, in both the meditation and the tc, but also you had mentioned that it had improved your concentration. Um, can you talk a little bit about that part too?

C- ....It's not that I understand it, about that....When you're approaching 60, as I am...I- sometimes you can't grab a name as quickly, or a word, as quickly than you might have done, 20 or 30 years earlier. And...I would hope I'm not developing Alzheimer's, but I do appreciate my own performance when I don't have to look in a dictionary or find a synonym that is suitable...It's just more pleasing to be able to have more facts at your fingertips, and tc – if that's what it is, maybe it's merely retiring – I'm in my second year of retirement – so, that too can help, I just don't have that much to do – but I would say that....the recall is sharper – if I read a newspaper article, I have more details when I discuss things....The way to the cottage is quite typical- prairie landscape and the path has not been particularly evident to me what corner comes before which other corner, if in fact there are many corners, and now, I can almost describe the whole route...um, partly because, well when I learned, when I learn tc I sort of anticipate, sometimes, which move comes next, all the while trying to concentrate on the move I'm doing, and this same thing seems to be occurring in you know, say, the driving a route, which we take often

INT- Right

C- But you know I have often read the whole way, talked, and not paid any attention at all to the ____ constantly flat, and very few hills. Now I can sort of describe it in relation to various things. This seems to be of no importance, but..._______ I notice it's, it's a change

INT- Oh, Ok. Um, one of the other things that you had talked about was that idea about tc being – as- you said you practiced tc rather than necessarily having to believe in tc. Um, do you , I guess, do you see any link between tc and your personal sense of spirituality, in just a very general sense?

C- Well, I shy away from the term 'believe in'.....because it has connotations of less than rational um, underpinnings......I used to say I was a Buddhist, but I don't know if I can say I'm a Buddhist any more because I eat meat, and I drink, from time to time, wine, I blaspheme on occasion, and, you know, I wasn't born in a Buddhist country, I celebrate Christmas, but I am in admiration of Buddhism. I don't – the word 'believe in' seems to be a verbal precursor or statement of faith, somehow 'I believe in the God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth' – that's the creed of the...Christian church, and I haven't – I don't go to Christian church anymore, although I used to, obviously. I admire who do, and who can, can find it valuable. I just have to say I got more from Buddhism. I mean it's a purely empirical matter of fact....almost utilitarian response, it's not a very pretty thing to have to say I suppose. And I can't say I believe in Buddhism, I practice some of it, uh...I practice tc – whatever you practice I presume, loosely speaking, is what you believe in. I mean, if you paint, you're a painter, if you do research you're a researcher, but believe in – it does approach spirituality....and I'm beginning to suspect that some of the most spiritual people are not those who, who say they are, or who want other people to think they are...They protest too much maybe? Spiritually, I get a great charge out of just everyday life actually, it's awesome, I mean, sun rising in the morning, shining on the trees – I know it's all scientifically explained but that's pretty spiritual, if by spiritual you mean it gives you great joy.

INT- mhm, yeah, something that holds great meaning in your life

C- And I think I've come to a point.....where I enjoy looking at things for just what they are, looking at people for I guess, what they are – their physiognomy can be quite amazing, the structure that has evolved – looking at young people and older people and...it's, I guess it's part of the sunrise thing. Uh.....I like planting things, like harvesting things...and maybe tc helps me to observe more of it, I get more from it. Spirituality though, I would very much be cautious of anyone who wanted to uh to lead a group, to make it a religion, I would probably go my own way at that point. I think the modern world has seen too much of what one single person can do with a group, causing them to go along with one person – mind you tc is going along, physically, with the movements that are taught – and for me that's fine, I see a difference.

INT- So you see it as like physical activity that you practice and that provides some types of, possibly physical or maybe some mental benefits to you-/C- and emotional /INT- and emotional benefits? Just want to make sure I'm understanding what you're saying. OK what would you say then is the thing you most enjoy about practicing tc?

C- Getting it right [laughs]. Doing it with a group – I enjoy doing it with a group too.

INT- Right. It sounds like it's really important for you to do it – I don't know if the right word's 'flawlessly' but to be able to do it without errors

C- mhm

INT- Is that right?

C- Well, Master Mak has said 'you do it very well, but you need to practice'. And of course, when you speak to a Buddhist monk or nun, they will say 'the practice' which refers to the daily practice of meditation. And of course, control – to control movement – if you can control your movements you can control your thoughts, and that's, I presume, some spin-off on tc is that you're not given to..saying or doing something that is..without consideration. Although spontaneity in my art is very important

INT- right

C- And sometimes spontaneity verbally is fine, but ...______...I wouldn't want to cut it out, I wouldn't want to cut out saying that there is – I have trouble with the concept of spirituality – what do you mean by that again? In your terms

INT- I think I'm trying to keep it really open because everybody's concept of spirituality is something very different and very personal to them, so it is, it s however, however you conceptualize it in your mind if there's a link between the practice of tc for you, and your experience of it, and your own personal idea of what spirituality is

C- mhm

INT- I'm actually going to let you think about that for a minute because I'm going to flip the tape. [stop tape]

[Start of Tape 2]

C- I think you were asking about my own concept of spirituality. I have to tell you this little story that maybe my religion – if you want to call it that- is what is beautiful, and of course I have my own idea of beauty, but, if there's a beautiful place, I seem to have the need to do the Sword or the need to do tc there, so I found the places along the lake, under the trees, where I can do the Sword, outside, out of the sun, or I guess the mottled sun, and that was an aesthetic experience. And, it's a way of seeing what is around you and seeing yourself in relation to that surrounding. You might say that another religion is, or, another aspect of my own personal religion in to keep the environment as in- as whole as possible and as undefiled as possible, because what is natural to me is most beautiful. And so I like to do these things outside in natural surroundings, or when the sun's shining through the window – the addition of a natural element can enhance the aesthetic aspect of my art. I'm not so sure you can separate aesthetics and spirituality because if you look any of the church – many of them – most of the churches, most of the religious structures, they strive for what is beautiful in order to encourage the people who are there to enter into a frame of mind that causes them to be spiritual....So I don't know where I might do tc next, but it could quite well be that again on a beach, or on a mountain top so, and just experiencing the movements, which would be I guess, the service of a church, in the environment – in a natural environment. I wouldn't dream of doing it in a church, except that I do – I mean in a cathedral

INT- right, ok. How do you – do you feel that doing tc and your background in terms of painting and drawing – is that a good fit for you? Is there some sort of a connection between um the experience you were feeling, as you were talking about, um, when you're painting or drawing or writing and the tool that you use and the sense of flow and doing tc?

C- .....I suppose they are all tools to transcendence, and in that respect it makes it _____, if you wish. Uh anything that helps us transcend - anything reasonable that helps us transcend...everyday..concerns or struggles or dilemmas, basically is good. And I know some people feel that they need to to draw or paint or write everyday or they're just unlivable, without an anchor, and if they can do that, then the rest of the day is fine. And...I haven't abandoned tc long enough recently to know how I would feel about doing it. But I think it's significant that the other day when I felt disappointed that I hadn't built my bones up over the last year, and was concerned that I might have some debilitating disease that was causing this deficiency, that I did tc. Not with any – as I said I don't know if I did all correctly but it seemed to be a way of lessening the pain. So if you turn to it when you're distressed or you turn to it when you're enjoying nature then it's a good instrument, because it helps you transcend or more fully appreciate life. In that respect, I guess it's a religion, although I wouldn't want to say I believe in tc, I practice tc, and I practice meditation, cause I like the results.

INT- OK, Um, well we're pretty much right on the nose, it's already 3:30, so I guess we'll stop there unless there's something you'd like to add

C- No it's fine

INT- OK [stop tape] [restart tape]

C- And I like the results enough for myself that I will bring a friend to class because I think it might help her

INT- Ok, Thank you.

Addendum

Clarified Line 14: "I went to the Taoist Tai Chi group a couple of times but I didn't care for it. This was in about 1990"

Line 65- "One part of it is a problem because I was absent for a whole summer last summer, and I missed a chunk of the lessons, so I was trying to make up just by following along, but I'm getting it – I've got it now."

Line 81- At 10:30 we stop after the second round, and we go and have tea and biscuits, and we socialize and talk to people.

Line 96- I can put the sword up as high as I want and the apple trees don't mind if I snip off a few leaves.

Clarified line 124, 126: The tape with a human voice is for Tai Chi. The one with music is for the sword

Line 132- It's sort of a total, a compelling necessity to be mentally and physically in touch with what's going on and where you're supposed to be.

Line 156- ...you're creating an image

Line 165- ...your hands become the sword and your mind, eventually, you hope, becomes the sword, you know, one unit, one thing, given to achieving an end while engaged in the "means".

Line 172- and then you look back over your shoulder and check them out again to see if you should try again.

Line 188- Because if you practice 3 times a day, which, when I was learning it, I was, experiencing an aching muscle is predictable.

Line 225- In the past when I've had a heavy load of work to do, report cards, lesson plans, and children at home,

Line 234- you try to calm your mind just by counting the breaths that go in and go out, and putting everything else aside

Line 261- I - sometimes can't grab a name as quickly, or a word, as quickly as I might have done, 20 or 30 years earlier.

Line 266- I'm in my third year of retirement

Line 269- The way to the cottage is quite typical- prairie landscape and the route has not been particularly evident to me

Line 277- the constantly flat landscape, and very few hills. Now I can sort of describe it in relation to various things. This seems to be of little importance, but...______ I notice it's, it's a change in my strength of recall.

Line 288- a verbal precursor of a statement of faith

Line 290- I admire some of those who do, and who can, can find it valuable.

Line 325- and that's, I presume, some spin-off from tc is that you're hopefully not so inclined to..say or do something that is..without consideration.

Line 329- And sometimes spontaneity verbally is fine. I wouldn't want to cut it out, I wouldn't want to cut out saying that there is a place for both approaches to life but one in which both the Dionysian and Appolonian natures temper each other.

Line 348- And so I like to do Tai Chi outside in natural surroundings, or when the sun's shining through the window

Line 351- if you look at any of the churches

Line 357- I wouldn't dream of doing it alone in a church – I mean in a cathedral

Line 363- I suppose they are all tools to transcendence.

Line 367- And...I haven't abandoned tc long enough recently to know how I would feel about not doing it.

Line 371- as I said I don't know if I did it all correctly

C. (ID#2)

Interview Transcript# 3

Date: September 5, 2001
Time: 12:30-14:00
Location: Interviewer's office – Boardroom
Atmosphere: Quiet

Follows review of transcript#2 during which time C's preference was to have the tape recorder turned off.

INT: So when I was reading through these transcripts I was noticing there were a couple of terms that you used that I wanted to just um, double check, and also there were a couple of questions that came from this [difficulty with tape recorder ticking]. Um, ok, you had talked a little bit about the idea of the sword um – you had noticed that it had made you somewhat verbally – your words were "verbally aggressive" and I just wanted to confirm with you – would the term 'assertive' accurately represent what you are talking about, or do you mean something different.

C: I think 'assertive' is much more limojuste – that's that' the word to use. I just don't withdraw from challenging situations as much as I used to and so I just interpreted that as a more aggressive approach to life, but 'assertive' is better

INT: Oh, ok, I just wanted to see if that's what really what you meant

C: For example, on the weekend at dinner, someone said out loud – I won't tell you who it was – 'She's emptying wine down the drain' And I finished what I was doing and turned around and said ' I'm rinsing a wine bottle' instead of saying something rude or less than elegant, the dinner went on and nothing more was said about that. And it's the measured quality of what I do and say that I find gratifying, and 'assertive' I would say that that's assertive without being unnecessarily retaliatory.

INT: Ok, alright. And you chock that up to a change that you experienced after you'd been doing the Sword for some time.

C: I suspect, I don't know what else it would be

INT: Ok. Um, another word that you happened to use was 'control' in the context of doing tc and I was wondering if you could talk a bit little bit more about that, elaborate there.

C: I don't mean control of other people, I mean control of the tongue, which is the worst thing to control. Um, other than that, I mean other than self-control, I think that's what I was referring to

INT: So it sounds like between the assertiveness and the control, there is a bit of a balance / C: there has to be / INT: between being a little bit more vocal, but at the same time saying the right thing at the right time

C: Uh-huh, and being compassionate...with someone I find it difficult to be compassionate with

INT: Mm, ok. You're very diplomatic. Another word you happened to use was the idea of um being strong. And I just wanted to see whether what you were referring to was inner strength – you were talking about being more decisive, being able to make a decision and being able to keep your decision and feeling strong

C: well that gets into a personal issue, um, that I don't think I want to go into at this time, but I decided on certain action and I – it was not terribly difficult, but I - it took me some time to actually make the decision and once I'd made it I decided that that would be it, and that any going back on it would be unacceptable, in my eyes

INT: I'm just going to stop the tape for a moment [stops tape to find quote in transcript re: 'control'] So you had said here um 'doing tc seems to help you make observations – these observations about yourself, seems to make you – to help you resolve to do something about it, and seems to help in the process of keeping the resolution because it has that advantage at least seemingly of making you be decisive and strong and that's a good feeling, feeling strong'. So here you're referring to inner strength rather than physical /C: oh yeah /INT: power, right, ok, that's fine. Is there anything else you wanted to add to that one?

C: No

INT: Um, you had just talked to me a bit [prior to turning on the tape] about how you had just started back at Andy's tc class, and I was just curious to find out from you about what might have been the impetus for going back there now

C: Well I don't know if I'm back, but I did go last night because I wanted to...I guess I wanted to show him that I had taken his recommendation to go to Master Mak and to continue with tc as he had started it with us, and to, to get some criticism on how I might improve. One student who seemed to know quite a lot said I was doing a lot of 'bobbing' uh said I should keep my head in the same level except for when you dip down to do the ocean move. Andy didn't actually have time to critici-to critique my tc, but at least I- I got to do it with a different group and I had the experience of doing it exceptionally slowly, uh, which was a challenge. And I enjoy watching Andy do it because he has such powers of concentration and it's like watching a moving fortress. And, also one of the - one other reason I went back was because one of the CUC tc members who does tc, Sword and Sabre, had been going also to Andy's class there and she recommended several times that I stop by some Tuesday evening, and my present teacher also recommended that I go, on a Tuesday night. As I said, evening is not a good time for me – it's the last of my energy and then I wake up at night sometimes, wanting to get on with the day.

INT: OK, um, at the end of the last interview you had mentioned an additional thing – you said that you, you liked the results enough for yourself that you would bring a friend to class because you thought it might help her. Uh, can you talk a bit about, just what kinds of benefits you mean when you're – when you refer to this?

C: Benefits for her?

INT: Um, I guess I'm trying to get more at um what were the benefits you were feeling that that tc had. – you don't need to talk about her specifically

C: Well, I sort of have to, but I won't use her name.

INT: OK

C: Um....she has some marital problems that she is trying to resolve, and she's also menopausal and I felt that it would probably help her to be strong in whatever decisions she was taking and to be, to have self-control in how she might handle it, and I – I enjoy the social aspect of the group and she's already made a friend there, who lives near her, and I think all these things are important, especially for someone who's going through a rough time, and if she practises, if she keeps going, it will, it will, I believe have some benefit for her

INT: Ok, so again that idea of inner strength /C: mhm /INT: development and you said that the social aspect seems to be quite /C: mhm /INT: quite an important part of tc for people – or in this environment anyway

C: Yes, in this environment

INT: And then you mentioned something about um – you mentioned about menopause. How do you feel this is beneficial, doing tc, in respect to that aspect of a person's life /C: I think any regular exercise would help the difficult symptoms – feeling really hot one moment and feeling really cold the next moment, and worrying excessively, uh, mm, crying out of the blue, feeling depressed, all of those things, sleeplessness, I mean, physical activity helps, but tc, because there are these other components of the social and the regular aspect of it – in this case, this place is open on Wednesday and Friday mornings, everyday throughout the year except Christmas and New Year's, and except when it's 40 below. I mean, those 2 days, you can be guaranteed that you will be in the company of people who are gentle people, learning something you want to learn too. So, for someone who's menopausal, it's an offer of routine, which, in some cases, is necessary and in some cases is not, but there it is, and some fellowship, as Christians say – fellowship, and the physical aspects of it, and as far as the other positive things, I'm not one to ask cause I don't have physiology courses and I don't have the historical background yet – I mean, as I said before, I would go to have acupuncture, not knowing why it works but hearing enough about it that I'm willing to try it. TC I think has a, a leveling, calming effect. Why it helps with menopausal, in some cases at least, I mean you can just take it off the top of your head that it's physical activity that's regular. And many people don't get enough physical activity – there are so many people who are overweight, and not that this would help you not be, but if it helps you to control your urges to eat or your urges to indulge in self-pity or your urges to verbally lash out then it's of enormous value, especially if you have a family.

INT: Yeah, I think rather than to ask you to have to explain why it is that you think tc works, it's more – what I'm asking more is just, you know, what are the things that you have experienced that you think were good for you r friend and that's why you encouraged your friend to go – you know things that you experienced personally, so if you had experienced benefit during your menopausal years or something like that, that's more what I'm interested to know – yes it did help you with this, or yes you experienced this while doing tc, but that's all – I don't need any – you don't have to go into any explanation about why, because that's something that's a bit in the blue for many of us, so...

C: They will perhaps know more about it eventually – I should do more research.

INT: OK, um, when you talked a bit about – just your background and how you were exposed to other cultures as you were growing up, one of the things that you had mentioned was that you – you seemed to perceive yourself as – sort of like a bridge between East and West, and I was wondering if you could just um, clarify to me – do you perceive tc as a way to for you to bridge East and West or, what did you mean by that?

C: I would definitely see that – anything that a person born and raised in the West does, that has its origins in the East, and anything that someone born and raised in the East – anything they do that has its origins in the West, is a bridge. And it might be a small gesture of merely preparing food in that way, or learning the language which is a much more – much more – it's a major undertaking and - I'm on my third language now, but none of them are Eastern, and it's very difficult to master a language when it's, when it's – well Mandarin is the hardest one in the world, we know that, at least for Westerners, and the Romance languages of course, once you've got one you can – not easily, but you can with some credibility, get on with the others. But when you get into Arabic and Sanskrit and Mandarin that's a whole new challenge – I don't know if I have enough time – I don't have enough time to learn a fourth language – just little smattering of it. But yes, the bridge can be built – I don't want this to sound corny but, I mean it can be built with a smile. I have a friend who lived in Europe for a while, who said that she didn't like it – specifically, one country at that time, she found very unfriendly, in Europe, and um, she went, ultimately, to San Francisco and she said she was so surprised that people smiled at her – she was actually Japanese Canadian, but she stayed in San Francisco, she died there.

INT: It made a very strong impression on her

C: hmm. So bridges between cultures, if we were all to work at it it would be better. And if we can't do it in our own personal relationships, countries are not going to do it, societies are not going to do it because they are made up of those components, and we have to be able to model. I mean we talk about modeling for kids, but we model for each other, too, everyday. You know, just because you're 75, doesn't mean you can't learn a new gesture. I've heard of people who are, for example, racially prejudiced against East Indians, one person in particular. But when her husband was desperately ill in hospital, and East Indian doctor, a young man, whom she said looked like a teenager, operated on her husband and saved his life. And after that, she was full of praise for East Indian people. And she was n older woman. So we, you know, you never know what effect you're going to have – a smile or a grimace or a subordinate clause that's either kindly or hateful, goes a long way. So bridges, I work at it – it isn't a difficult thing for me – the time is the difficult thing.

INT: Alright, thanks. Um...you had mentioned, I think when we had talked a little bit about some of the other benefits of tc – I'm just going to go back through the document here, um, you had said – you had talked a little bit about meditation and tc together and you had said that the 'Vipassana does for you intellectually and emotionally, perhaps, you could say, what tc does for you emotionally and physically.' [2.2.219] And so I was wondering if you could talk a bit about um, what you feel tc has done for you emotionally, if there's any more than what you've talked about before.

C: ....Well, in retrospect, I would say that before I practised Vipassana or tc, I – being younger too – I would react without consideration more often. And, if it's emotionally you're specifically interested in, I believe this is pertinent, because the way you react to a comment or an act, is informed by your emotional response at the time, and so, with Vipassana and with tc, it's a more meditative approach to life and you can consider what it is, sometimes surprisingly to yourself, you know, in retrospect you might say 'that was a good answer, I can, I can see how I might have answered quite differently' or 'I might have done something in a different way but that was a good answer and I wonder where that power came from, or ' I wonder where the courage to say it that way' came from....and measured response is always the best...the understatement, especially if there's an audience.

INT: OK, it sounds like you talk a lot about that idea of kind of being self-reflective. Is that something that you would consider has been developed over the course of both the meditation and the tc?

C: I think we're forced by life to reflect on what we've done – and we can make mistakes – we all do, in how we've responded, and we resolve that the next time something like that happens we'll handle it differently. And I've had a lot of occasion to practise in the classroom – I mean you can be provoked and think of good responses that children will pick up on and that's gratifying. At one point I said to a naughty child 'Don't be insensitive' rather than a hundred other things one might have said. And the children, for the rest of the year, when they were aggravated by someone, would say, 'Don't be insensitive'. [laughs] I mustn't get off the point, let's see...um, yeah the measured response is very important and the reflection on how you act or what you say, is the only way you can learn. If you don't look back on it, you're just going from one instance to another blindly. And even now, we're still a long way –I am a long way from being totally kindly or diplomatic at all times. Sometimes an aggressive – or your word /INT: oh, assertive? /C: Assertive – sometimes an assertive response is cathartic – I'm not saying we should all go around uh swallowing the words we really want to say, and finding something very soft – I don't think that works all the time – it depends on the situation.

INT: OK. Um, now what I'd like to do now is I kind of um, did up a quick summary for me of some uh, some things that you had said through the course of the various interviews and I want to check it I've kind of summarized them correctly, cause I tried to do some paraphrases using words that you used within the context of the interview. You had mentioned that possibly the influence of another person – of seeing the Buddhist monk in England doing tc was um kind of like the seed that started you thinking of tc perhaps, um, and you had also mentioned that part of what maybe drew you was also your interest in the East, is that right?

C: mm

INT: And another reason why you might have been able to get involved in tc is because it became something that was more convenient for you and as you retired you had more time / C: and energy /INT: and energy

C: I also took religious studies when I was in my early 20's at the U the University of – UBC. So the propensity for this sort of thing I think has been there for a long time.

INT: Right, ok. And then you had mentioned that you had perhaps accepted or expected that something good would come of doing it, though you weren't quite sure what – is that right? Cause I remember hearing a couple of times, you saying 'perhaps some mysterious good would come of doing this'

C: That's about it

INT: Is that right? OK So something a little bit unknown

C: mhm

INT: Ok. And that also, in terms of your health, that a health condition had also been a precursor and possible kind of spurred you on to / C: although, Maria, you know, I had already been to tc before I had known I had osteoporosis. I didn't know I had osteoporosis until after I had retired – which was, actually June of the year I retired /INT: right / C: 1999 /INT: Yeah I think you said just a month before you retired

C: So I had already been to Victor's class, and I tried it at the Taoist group too but I didn't care for it stopped

INT: OK, alright. And then you said you had already planned to go back to tc once you retired and then you found out that you had the osteoporosis, but you were already going – all of the activities happened /C: it increased my fervour /INT: OK, for activity overall – for physical exercise overall / C: for tc /INT: oh for tc / C: Yeah physical overall too /Yeah, ok, alright

C: But it couldn't be excessive because might break a bone, crush a vertebrae or, so tc was /INT: nothing high impact / C: yeah

INT: And then, you had talked about something that was a bit interesting because you had mentioned – it almost seems like a bit of a contradiction but I think that I understood it to be that the reasons why you could not be as physically active while you were working was really because, not just being busy – it was just a lack of time

C: mhm

INT: But, um, an impetus for starting tc was also to deal with the fact that you were having a very busy life / C: mhm /INT: and to deal with, I'm assuming, sort of the stresses of that

C: Well, Vipassana, as I mentioned another time, I would do when I was feeling overburdened with a lot of other things, and as I said before, to sit down on a bench and meditate when you've got all these things lined up to do seems the opposite from the point of view of common sense, of what would be intelligent as an approach, to resolve it. But I soon found that the onerous quality of all these things diminished after a 20-minute 30-minute period of meditation and that everything seemed to line up and seem manageable after that. And that was – often that happened when things, so

INT: Well and I saw sort of almost a link between that and the tc for example when you said that you had received the phone call about your bone scan and what you did first was you went to do some tc after that to deal with / C: mhm /INT: that issue

C: I used to go sit on the bench to deal with this sort of thing, but I – I haven't been meditating all that much. This morning I- I did tc, and the Sword, and then I went to sit for a bit on the bench. And I found an interesting contrast between the 2 procedures – one is so – so physically active and the other is absolutely motionless, and all of the attention focuses inward. It was an interesting contrast. I can see why years ago, the head monk said it was a – tc was a good thing to combine with meditation. But it took me this long, till this day, which is of course one of the advantages of talking to you, because not many people are interested in that kind of thing.

INT: Well, that's interesting. So for you it sort of evolved – you're still learning

C: Oh I hope

INT: Oh, OK, and then, we talked a little bit about why you continue to do tc and um, sometimes you've said, you know, someone said it was good for us to do tc, and um, who was that someone? Is it something you read? Or is that a teacher or, who was the influence behind that?

C: Victor – Victor had me convinced that food things would come from this. Master Mak is very highly regarded and I just concluded that anyone of his venerable age who could still teach tc and be honoured as the Master must have lots to offer and if its – that's what put him there or helped to keep him physically and mentally alert, until age 89, it must have something for everyone. And, he's a very powerful man, he has such presence, and I would say probably a lot of insight just from watching people, and looking at them – not just how they do tc, but the faces, their eyes. I don't speak much with him because we don't have much of a common language. But he is the moving force behind that whole group. I don't know what will happen if and when he dies. But it's almost – you know, I never resent going or say 'I wish I could just skip' or whatever...it's it's a combination of things – I suspect it's very good for me, from what I've observed. It's an aesthetic experience, and.. especially at the Sword class, I'm a part of that – the geography of that group, and I don't do the Sword well with any other group – you know I tried last night and it doesn't do much for me - but this one does. And I go in honour of him, and of CJ also, who taught me also.

INT: 'Kay. Maybe what I could get you to do is sort of sum up um, I'd like to ask you if we could, just – How would you define or describe tc for somebody who has never seen it before, and – how would you explain to them, just kind of in a nutshell, what tc is and what it has – and what the experience has been for you, what it has given you?

C: Well, if a person had not heard of tc at all before, I would probably tell them that it is – it appears to be a slow dance, but it is actually self-defense, but not self-defense in an aggressive way, more in an internal building way, whereby it enables you to – to handle things in a wiser method. I would probably say that...the chi is the energy that moves around in the body – as I understand it anyway – as you do these forms, as you do these movements, and that this is partly, presumably, what creates good circulation and adequate respiration and an alignment of all of the organs of the body, and then the consequent emotional balance. I would quote Victor's story that um if you're doing tc and no one laughs at you you're not really doing tc, because it, well, because it – at first glance, if you've never seen it before – you wonder what is occurring. But it is beautiful, it's a synchronized, hopefully synchronized [laughs] movement performed by a number of people, or one person. Um, what else could they – would one say – Tai Chi...it takes a few months to learn, it takes years to learn it well, there are different styles, not necessarily compatible, but they're all done slowly, and they're all done with the knees slightly bent, and no, you can't have music playing as you learn it, and you would be well-advised not to have music playing when you practise it. And, I would tell them that in China I understand that they do this every morning, early, together, and in Edmonton, there is a small group that practises it, in summers anyway, I think, early, some mornings, somewhere downtown, by the river valley. And the main benefits will be, if you learn it well, and practise it faithfully, I would predict that you will find life more pleasant, and that you will have more to give of quality, and that's the best we can hope for.

INT: Thank you. That's a very nice description. I'm just going to stop the tape here.

Addendum

Line 1- Follows review of transcript#2 during which time the tape recorder was turned off.

Line 10- I think 'assertive' is much more "le mot juste" – that's the word to use.

Line 102- Why it helps with menopause

Clarification of Line 107: If you have a family, your influence is daily and intensive. If you don't, your state of health is mainly your own concern – other than at work and with friends and acquaintances.

Line 122- I would definitely say that – anything that a person born and raised in the West does, that has its origins in the East, and anything that someone born and raised in the East – anything reasonable they do that has its origins in the West, is a bridge.

Line 133- I had a friend who lived in Europe for a while

Verification of Line 122-150: Doing tai chi is a personal gesture of embracing another culture.

Line 154- 'Vipassana does for you intellectually and emotionally, perhaps, you could say, what tc does for you intellectually, emotionally and physically.' [2.2.219]

Clarification of Line 161-163: with Vipassana and with tc, it's a more meditative approach to life and you can consider what it (the aggravating comment or the act) is

Line 173- And I've had many occasions to practise in the classroom

Line 183- sometimes an assertive response is cathartic but I'm not saying we should all go around uh swallowing the words we really want to say, and finding something very soft – I don't think that works all the time– it depends on the situation. Meditation and tai chi help, undoubtably

Line 198- I also took religious studies when I was in my early 20's at UBC.

Clarification of Line 209: although, Maria, you know, I had already been to tc before I knew I had osteoporosis. I was first diagnosed with osteoporosis in June of 1998.

Line 230- you've got all these things lined up to do seems contrary to common sense, and not intelligent as an approach, to resolve it.

Line 243- But it took me this long, except for about one month earlier this year

Addition to Line 252 re: who said tai chi was good for her: "I've heard things from many sources"

Line 260- But it's almost – you know, I never regret going or say 'I wish I could just skip' or whatever

Line 265- And I go in honour of Master Mah, and of CJ also, who taught me, too.

Sally (Participant ID #4)

Interview Transcript #1

Date: Sept. 26, 2001
Time of interview: 9:30-10:30
Location: Sally's home

INT- OK, so first I thought I'd go through the background information really quick. Um, and, so you say you're in excellent health, and you mentioned a couple of different occupations that you have currently, so maybe I'll ask you a little bit about that

S- I've been a registered nurse for almost 40 years, and have practised in rehabilitation and palliative care, and in the last 15 years we'll say, um, have developed an interest in energy healing techniques, so I've pursued my studies in therapeutic touch (TT) and Reiki and I'm a registered practitioner in TT and have levels 1 and 2 in Reiki, and I've used these in my nursing practice, particularly in Palliative care. Um, having terminated full-time employment, I now have a designation with the Alberta Association of Registered Nurses as a nurse in private practice. So with that designation I can then I have then set up a business for myself, doing Reiki and TT. Now I continue to keep my, my um connections with the Palliative care people in CHA and I am actually a casual employee on the Palliative care unit at the GNH, but I also volunteer there and volunteer my energy healing services as well. So that's a bit of a capsule of what I'm doing – not too busy [laughs being retired

INT- Well it sounds like you're work's pretty steady though, you're busy

S- Mm, sometimes a little too much, yes

INT- Well how long have you been doing the Reiki and the TT – like how long have- actually maybe a better question: how long have you been involved in alternative therapy?

S- Um, I first became interested in the TT in about 1987 – I was a Home Care (HC) employee at the time in Palliative Care and an occupational therapist, actually, had had some training, and wanted-and did use this when she was out visiting with people, and we asked her to do an inservice and explain what TT was. So that's that's the beginning that was what whetted my appetite, and I pursued some formal training myself beyond that. And the Reiki became-started to become really popular in the early 90s as well, and I mean- TT as a modality, was developed in the early 70s, although it's based on ancient techniques, or ancient ideas, as is Reiki, and it also has just enjoyed a rebirth in the last 20 years, probably. I didn't become aware of Reiki until the early 90s and I think it began to become practised and taught more as we moved into the 90s. So in '93, I took a preliminary course in Reiki, because I wanted to see how it fit with TT and where they had some similarities and differences. And their principles are very similar. The way you do the technique is a little different, length of time, where you position your hands, and so on, but I really think that when you're talking about energy flow in the human body and energy flow around the body, Reiki and TT really are standing on the same basic premise then.

INT- Mm, oh, ok. Um, have you had an interest in things like complementary medicine or other approaches for a long time? Or was that in 1987/ S-I think 1987 was probably the beginning /INT-when you started-

S- If I were to add to that answer I would say that I've always felt that you needed to look at the whole person, not just the physical things that you're assigned to do – and I'm thinking as a nurse here now – you're working on a unit, you're working for HC, you have a pt with a certain dx and situations or problems to solve, you have Dr's orders to help you sort out some of those things and then you play the advocacy role, of course, as well. But, that tends to focus on the disease entity and perhaps the physical body, shall we say, whereas my awareness always, has been that the emotional, spiritual – mental, emotional, spiritual components are really really important. And I could see this kind of energy stuff kind of fitting in with that concept that I carried around in my head- and I'm not unique in that sense, I know that the nursing profession does that. But I think that we, as we moved into a very technical way of looking after people, we've lost sight of some of that, and I think that this kind of thing, and being introduced to the TT and the Reiki, sparked something in me that said, 'here's where we can start to bring in the other aspects of what makes a whole person, how each one of us is whole' and I think, more in the last 5 years, perhaps, maybe a little more, um..I know I'm pushing the hose uphill, by making making people aware of TT and Reiki, um..because they're still thinking about the symptom and the pills and the techniques and the this and the that, but I want to say, 'But you can put some of this in too'. So rather than considering these modalities alternate, I like to look at them as complementary, and integrative therapies, because that's where I think they belong. And there are lots of nursing theorists who have come along with, um, their concept of how we relate, as a professional to the client, or just as 2 people across the table for dinner, and where this idea of energy and flow of energy fits in.

INT- Mm, ok. I guess my next question would be – and this deviates a little bit from the questions I asked you to prepare for, but now I'm curious 'cause it sounds...How do you see tc fitting in - /S-With that? /INT- Yes

S- There's a flow of energy associated with doing tc too, I mean that the uh, the masters of tc – I've never talked in detail with Master Chen for example, or the – I did some Taoist tc in the past and I haven't talked that way with the leaders of those groups either, but um, I know that in teaching tc, um, they are teaching you a set that allows for physical and spiritual well-being. And Master Chen makes that fairly clear, you know, he wants you to do it slowly and he's talking about how good it is for you and he labours with his English of course, but that's the idea that he's putting across. So again, I think that the idea of an energy flow within the body, an energy flow around the body, fits with the way you do the movements of tc, and how you um allow yourself, when you know the set well, to, not necessarily be totally with the physical, but you can go inside and be – and do some of the meditative stuff that goes with that as well. You have to know the set well before you could do that [both laugh]

INT- Right

S- But it isn't purely a physical thing. And, when you have um, been doing tc for an hour, say, and - being with the group is important too – but let's just talk about me as an individual. After an hour's worth of tc, I know that I feel more centered, I know that everything feels more relaxed, I know that my eyes feel brighter. Well, that isn't entirely physical, there's a mental-emotional-spiritual component to that as well. Um, when you're working with a group and doing tc sets in the group, and – I'm talking about a group that has learned a full set and is doing it well and feeling comfortable with it – you can also feel that interchange of energy within the group that are doing the set together. Well, that's not physical, there's something more to that, and I've used this mental-emotional-spiritual – I've used that term a lot, but I think there's a mind-body-spirit um, component to tc and you can feel that in the group, when you're working in a group. So that's, that would be some of the ways in which I would see it it fits. It's also a very ancient technique, just like TT and Reiki-or the basis of them- and comes from the part of – they all come from similar parts of the world, you know the uh China, Japan, India, Tibet, you know, all that stuff, civilizations that have been around a heck of a lot longer than we have been, in North America, and I think they have some good stuff to teach us.

INT- Right

S- Balance, right?

INT- ....Um, I just want to take a quick step back, because I want to clarify a couple of terms that you had mentioned. When you talk about that idea of after you practise about feeling 'centered' can you tell more about what you mean by that, what that's about?

S- Mm, mhm. There are 2 words that you'll hear bandied about – 'centered' and 'grounded'. 'Centered' means that–to me, and this is from reading a little bit and doing a lot of practise – centering means being still, quieting the chatter that's around you and in you – um, and the chatter isn't necessarily a group of people in the room, but just the buzz that you've got around you from, say, what you've come from before you came to this point, or uh, the problems of the day, and you try to quiet that kind of thing. And at the same time, in a visual way, go inside, and for me this is a process of just trying to draw energy into my heart area. Different people will do this a different way, but that's, that's how I do that. And you've heard the term 'chakras' which are energy centers and these too come out of ancient India and so on. And there is a heart chakra, so I tend to use that as the centre point and I tend to say 'be still', I do some breathing to try and draw that in, and to let go of the, I'll say the toxic stuff of the day. That's what I call centering. Now, I can expand on that and say that 'grounding' involves centering, but grounding means having your feet on the floor, or the ground, and being aware that you have a solid place, that you feel the soles of your feet. And usually to do that, you have your feet about shoulder width apart. Now that goes with the positioning that you take when you start out a tc set. So it's having – in our modern language, it's having neutral posture, really, and if you have the neutral posture with the, uh, soles of your feet, your hips, shoulders all lined up, and then letting your shoulders relax and a tiny bit of a bend in your knees and a tiny little bend in your hips, then you can also center and you can also feel grounded because you feel solid, you feel a connection with the earth. So, does that answer your question?

INT- Yeah. You also mentioned that after you practise tc, you said that your eyes feel bright. /S- Yeah /INT- Tell me more about that

S- Well, I think that's because you improve circulation to a certain extent. Um, the tc set does that, it's good for muscle toning, it's good for increasing vascular capacity, and if you are tired maybe, or just carrying a big load of stuff around [motions to head] – the problems you're trying to sort out, I think your vision is also affected in the sense that your circulation maybe isn't quite as good as it could be. Um, so that's the physical part of it. But I also think when you've done a tc set that you do clear out some of that stuff, you get rid of the things that have been a burden on your shoulders, and - those problems are still there and you're still gonna have to go back and face them tomorrow morning and all that stuff, but- somehow or other you just let go of a layer of stuff, and in so doing, you brighten everything up, and that maybe slightly foggy feeling that your eyes had as part of that, disappears, and you just, feel centered, you feel more alert, you feel, you have more energy. Um, yeah my problems are there but I can sort them out – they're not quite as burdensome. So that would be a mental-emotional piece that goes with that type of thing.

INT- So when you're describing that you're talking about, not only the physical aspect /S-No, I'm talking about /INT-of seeing /S-Yeah, I'm talking about mental-emotional stuff /INT- Yeah, yeah, ok, right

S- Cause you can't separate those out, you know? That's a very fuzzy line there, and it's forever changing.

INT- ....You mentioned a few times already that um, you really believe in looking at the person, I guess holistically /S- yeah, as a whole person /INT- and thinking about the physical, and mental and spiritual and emotional aspects. Um, can you talk a little bit about how you see um, tc fits with some – the spiritual aspects of a person?

S- Mhm

INT- Just from your own personal experience rather than trying to dx or explain /S- why, yeah /INT- If it does for you at all, I don't know

S- Yeah, um, it does...and again, I think it's part of feeling centered, feeling at peace, more so than when I began to do the tc set. I feel it mostly at the conclusion of the tc set, when you bring yourself back to the neutral position [demonstrates]- and as you and I know, there's some – with each of the sets that we learn, you bring your hands in, sometimes you cross them and then bring them out, and down, or you bring them in like this and turn them over and then straighten your arms out so that they're at shoulder level and then you bring them down to your side. There's, there's a wonderful..settled feeling, or peaceful feeling, that you can let yourself have, as you start to slowly bring your hands down from eye level or shoulder level, and bring them down slowly until they're resting at the sides of your body. Um, you know what I'm talking about. Um, and, for me, what I feel, is that internal sense of bringing in something peaceful – we ca n call it something spiritual – peaceful's a better word I think, because again it has a settled feeling for my physical body, but it also has a component of...um...feeling quiet, no chatter, the chatter is gone, you know, so that you can just be in your own centre, and to me that's far more than physical, you're really paying attention to the inner self. So that's the spiritual piece of that, you know.

INT- Right. Oh ok.....So all that came from us talking first about your occupation [both laugh]

S- Right

INT- Your involvement in complementary therapy....So, um, maybe we can take a step back and you could tell me a little bit about actually, how it is that you got started in tc.

S- Mm. I was Taoist tc that I first begin with, and there are a couple of centers for Taoist tc in the city. This goes back to the 80s also. Uh, and the Taoist tc group over here in Mill Creek was trying to generate membership, and they did tc demonstrations at the fringe, and they had – oh I don't know – 20 people, and then you'd come along and do the street fringe thing you know and have their slot – and of course in those days, you didn't have to book your slot, it was a smaller festival altogether. So we would stand and watch them, and they had some music going, and I- partly it was the music I know – but it was also watching these people move in a set together and the – I like the slowness of tc, um, and the moving in unison, and, I'm sure without being able to have identify it in those days, I was again picking up the energy that flowed within that group and out to some of us who were standing there watching. And I said to G__ (husband), 'I'd like to try this' So the 2 of us started to do tc twice – 2 evenings a week- 2 hour sessions 2 evenings a week. And we did that for almost 2 years, together. Now, we gave it up at that time, because it was a time commitment that we just couldn't meet – our kids were all still living at home at that point, and though they were in their teen years and independent, it just – you know how...lives change and family dynamics shift – and we just felt we couldn't keep it going to that extent so we gave that up then.

INT- Ok

S- And I didn't pick it up again, until I saw your program at the General. But the interest in it never died, you know, there's always 'I must get back to that someday'. So when you offered the after work, once a week program, that was ideal. You know

INT- So that was convenient for you

S- Oh, oh yeah, it fit in, and I really wanted to get back to doing some of that.

INT- Ok. So how long was the break between your first experience and then when you started again?

S- Yeah. About 7 years.

INT- Oh, ok alright

S- Six, seven years

INT- Right. And then after the class at the General, you went straight to the Multicultural /S- yeah /INT-Centre

S- You mentioned the Multicultural Centre's Sunday afternoon, so I moved right in, into that, and that I've kept up ever since

INT- Right, ok. Um, so, was you first exposure to tc actually at the fringe when you saw it? /S- Yeah /INT- Or did you know about it before

S- I think I knew about it. But um, only as a name and a s a form of exercise, simple as that. And it wasn't really until I saw it, in action, that I began to understand and have my appreciation for it.

INT- Mm, ok. .....Between when you saw it the first time, and when you actually started to do it – when you started to do it yourself, were there any surprises for you? Were there any unexpected experiences that you ...you went through?

S- Well, I can say yes, but I also have to couch that in what was going on in my life at the time. My mother was ill, and-died in 1989- and we were doing this tc over the time that she was ill and died, and I think that the thing that surprised me first, and then I, you know I sort of realized what was happening – is that it brought out a lot of emotional stuff related to the fact that she was dying, and maybe some of the unfinished business that one sometimes has with a parent, and I certainly had some of that. And I found some evenings when I was doing tc, that I was extremely tired, and was eventually able to identify this as, the emotional baggage I was carrying, and that doing the tc set brought some of this to the surface. So, you wonder why you're so fatigued, but you can, in retrospect, realize that you're dealing with some of your grief, and I was dealing with some unfinished business, some of which made me angry, and I think that the act of doing tc and getting energy flowing in my body, helped to raise some of the stuff from – that I might have otherwise have just held and buried underneath. I'm also an advocate of the idea that we hold our emotional pain in our physical bodies, and that we can have sore lower backs or constant headaches, or tight shoulders, because we carry some of that kind of burden. And I think the tc started to bring some of that out – now that was, that was new stuff to me at the time. I mean, it's not now, because um, doing tc, doing Reiki, doing TT, you hear this being discussed in the literature all the way along. Now, something else I should add- which isn't on the page that I filled out for you- is that I also did, for 3 or 4 winters, bioenergetic exercises. I don't know whether you're familiar with these or not

INT- No I'm not

S- Um, the founder of this system is Lowen, I think his first name is Alexander

INT- Oh

S- Does that ring a bell?

INT- That rings a bell

S- Yeah. He's in NY, and he and his wife developed exercises to help people, not only physically feel better, but also to 'shed the worries of the day', 'try to deal with the emotional issues – I hate my boss, what am I gonna do about it – I have to live with him', you know, so some of the physical things that help you to get rid of the emotional component that you have to put aside in order to be able to still function. I'm trying to explain how he functions too quickly and I'm probably not doing it very well. But I suddenly realized that into all of this, over the years, from say, '87 to the present, which is what – 14 years, also was some experience with bioenergetic exercises.

INT- Oh, ok

S- So if I come back to the point about the – any surprises with the tc, I was surprised to feel as fatigued as I was, I was surprised to feel as much anger as I did, but I now realize in retrospect, with all the other experiences that I've had, that this is precisely what I was doing, was raising some of my sadness and my anger related to death of a parent.

INT- ....So, when you first experienced those – I guess those emotions coming out when you practised – did you recognize it right away?

S- No

INT- Because I'm curious that you would um, when you feel those things- those are probably quite strong emotions and that there might have been the – were you ever tempted to stop doing tc at point?

S- No, I wasn't tempted to stop the tc, if for no other reason that it was the only physical exercise I was getting at that point. Um....I think I was too emotionally involved in what was happening with death, with the death of my mother, to recognize what I can now articulate for you, because you're too bound up in it, you know, it's the forest for the trees syndrome. It's only the hindsight that really gives you the um, the respect for what was happening and the wisdom that comes from it. Um, I know I must have had a little bit because my job in Palliative Care, as a HC case manager, meant that I was our helping other families do the same thing. And that's another component of it probably because you put aside your own stuff, in the interests of putting your energy for you – what your clientele are dealing with, and that, of course is one of the dangers of, of that kind of helping profession.

INT- Oh, ok......And now, now that you've been playing tc for, I guess it would be- what is it, about um

S- It's 4 or 5 years – '96 to 2000 – it's a good 5 years

INT- It's 5 years, ok

S- Yeah – wow! Ok! [both laugh]

INT- It's kind of crept up, eh?

S- Yes it has [laughs]. You know, I will say to people, when they ask me where I do it and when I do it, um, and then they sort look at me when I say 'Sunday afternoon', and my response is ' Yep, it ties up every Sunday afternoon' So, you either integrate that into life or you don't, and for some people it would work and for lots of other people it wouldn't work. And there certainly are times when I've said 'Hm, don't want to be there today'. But it's just so important to my week, that I will accommodate it, even though sometimes it's awkward, and I try not to miss any more Sunday afternoons than I have to, you know. So it's a commitment, like anything else, you know, you're gonna swim twice a week, or gonna make sure you walk every morning or you're gonna lift weights 3 times a week – everyone will tell you, that they have to push themselves into it every once in awhile. But the benefit is there.

INT- Yeah, that was going to be my next question because it sounds to me like you're quite busy and so, um, in your whole week really, and so the fact that you are able to make that commitment to get there every Sunday for a couple of hours

S- Mhm, barring the weeks that I lost with my back problem and so on, earlier in the year. But yeah, it's just important to be there. The other thing about this group- and I think this is important for any um, group activity that you join- is that the tone of this group is very good. Um, Master Chen is a very personable individual, as a leader. And so are the other helpers, yourself included, you know, there's a nice feel there. Um, there's a camaraderie, there's a helpfulness, there's no one there doing any sort of um, judging or putting you down, you know, there's none of that in that group. And that hasn't been my experience in groups. And I know as a – one of the reasons why we did drop out of the other group years ago, was there was a leader there who was, you know, too busy trying to deal with his own stuff and then projected it onto, onto our group. So that, coming into this group has been very enjoyable and, if you like the group you'll go back, you know, it's the same within – I mean, we can use that word 'community' if you like. There needs to be something there that appeals to you, that makes you – that draws you back, that makes you look forward to the activity each week, and that is present in the Sunday afternoon group. So that, that's a big piece of, of what attracts me as well as, just learning the tc and doing the tc. And I'm a slow learner, I'm not very good at retaining all those steps! [laughs]

INT- Oh I don't know, you seem to learn pretty quickly to me!

S- Oh, I'm following everybody else! [laughs]

INT- So you find this group particularly supportive

S- Yeah and there's a nice tone there, you know, and we have fun, you know.

INT- You had mentioned a couple of times now that whole idea about sort of the dynamics of a group – it sounds like well, it's attractive to you to continue tc with this particular group, because of the tone of it, but also you mentioned that when the group practises together that there is a certain kind of energy.

S- Yeah

INT- Could you talk a bit about that? What it is, - do you see this as the same kind of energy as you would have with another group, for example, if you're doing another, I don't know – some other activity, another type of exercise, any other groups that you've worked with or you've played with, I guess, or do you see it as a different kind of energy?

S- Well I suppose that the easiest group to compare it with would be the bioenergetic group, where again, we were there, focusing on self, but focusing on energy flow in self. And though we didn't do a lot, an awful lot of talking, and we participated by following one person's leadership – her instructions as we went along through the hours exercising, there was still that common thread there of wanting to be there, to look after our selves, to create an environment in which energy could flow and energy could be balanced in our bodies. And that's bound to have interconnectedness around the circle of the group. And that's what I feel in the tc group, is that, as we do the set, we're working together – we may not all be at the same level of um learning or even being able to do the set automatically from our own memory, but we help each other, so even, whether we're at the same level of expertise, or whether we're helping each other, there is that interconnectedness among the group, maybe 2 people,, maybe 4 people, and I, in terms of talking about energy and energy flow, there is a flow of energy around an entire group that's doing the same thing. I wouldn't have been aware of that 10 years ago, made that kind of statement, but again, with the experience of the different forms of energy activities or therapies that I had, and some of the reading that I've done, I have to come back to these nursing theorists-I'll call them- who have developed conceptual frameworks around energy and energy flow, so I'll say again, that these theorists will talk about the energy flow within the individual, the energy flow that is immediately around that individual, and then the connectedness that that has between individuals, or a bunch of individuals in a group. And I see the same thing in a tc group, because of the common activity that we're doing. Now you can take that out of a tc group context and you can put that into the context of a church community, congregation, who have sort of a common purpose for being there, or you can take it into a small group, such as the one that I belong to, there are 5 of us who have a monthly meeting as a women's spirituality group. Now we really just sit and visit and talk about what's happened over the past month. We don't concentrate our spirituality in any focused way such as prayer or meditation or yoga, or any of those things you would consider to have maybe a more heightened spiritual component to them, but there's the same kind of energy there – we know each other, we like each other, each of us believes in God-we all come out of a Christian background, but that's really neither here nor there. It's just there's the same kind of energy flow among us as a group, and a connectedness and a caring that we have for each other, you know. So I think, you have to look at energy in a...how do I want to put this – in a broad way, and you have to, I think, grasp the idea that we're not, none of us as individuals is isolated in any way – we do our connecting, we do it all the time, you know, get on the subway and you're gonna connect with a couple of people around you, even if it's just to try and avoid touching, I mean you're still making a connection. Do you know what I mean?

INT- Yeah

S- So, I'm chattering on here, but, as I start to talk and start to think about it, I realize that this has – you can put that stone in the pond and the ripples just go out from there, you know.
INT- Ok...It sounds to me like some of what you talked about, um, might be, one of the terms that I think of group cohesion, but it sounds like it's also more than that. Is that right?
S- Yeah, it's cohesion, but there's a free flow there too, you know it doesn't all stick [both laugh]
INT- Right
S- The molecules can move around
INT- Alright
S- I think of adhesive tape when I think of cohesion, but that's probably the extreme on one side of cohesion would be, don't you think? Yeah, cohesion is also respect, isn't' it? For individuals and you work together but you recognize and respect the other's individuality as well
INT- Well, it sounds like the energy flow and the dynamic that you're talking about might be an element of group cohesion /S-Mhm
S- Definitely, definitely
INT- .....So, um currently what you're doing is you're attending the class on the Sundays, for an hour and a half, but throughout the rest of the week, do you ever get the opportunity to do other practise or not really? Like I notice here that you haven't put any other-
S- Yeah, I'm sure the opportunities are there, I'm just not very disciplined [both laughs]
INT- Mhm
S- And if the mood strikes me, yes, I will do some tc during the week. Um, and I can say that I should, because I know that I benefit from it when I do, even if I just take the Simple tc set which takes – what, about 8 minutes to do- and if I could sort of build that into my life every morning or something like that. But I'm afraid I'm not that disciplined [laughs]
INT- Well I think it's interesting that you feel like you get so much out of it, doing it the one day a week
S- Mhm. And I have other forms of exercise that I fit in on other days, so my goal, purely from a physical standpoint, is to have a small variety of things that I like to do, and to do them regularly. So I feel that if I get the hour and a half or 2 hours – it's not really 2 hours- um on Sunday, with tc, that's just part of the whole week of what I set out for myself.
INT- Ok. So tc is just one of the elements /S-yeah/ INT-within kind of a – what you've got it like a physical activity program where you have walking /S- I have walking and swimming /INT- Right, OK....Um, do you currently do any other sort of related activities, um, I think you mentioned here not really – like it asks you about meditation /S-oh, like yoga or meditation , yeah
S- Not, not really, not formally. Um, I certainly will spend time trying to centre myself, and to feel grounded, and you can do that very quickly and very easily. Um, when the moment- when I feel that I need to , you know, if something's become very stressful, or I'm going to pick up the phone and make a call that I know is going to be a very difficult call, or I'm going in to see patients where and when I'm volunteering with GN. You take that moment to just settle yourself, cool the chatter, before you go in, because you do a better job.
INT- So what do you do for yourself to centre yourself when – like for example -
S- Yeah, I try to assume the neutral posture and I try to take a couple of deep breaths so that I'm drawing in good energy – I call it that way – from the universal source [looks upward and uses hands to motion down through centre of self from head to chest] and to let go of toxic energy. Those are the words I like to use. And you can do that very very quickly – I mean, even 30 seconds. Or if you're confronted with something that – unexpectedly – you can also do that kind of centering, just - even if you just do it as a visualization within yourself because you're physically not able to go through the motions. But I think that

kind of thing is important to feeling centered, feeling grounded, to handle that situation, to stay cool, I mean, that's precisely what we're doing, you know? Stay calm.
INT- Ok...Um, maybe what we'll do is we'll – do you have any other comments for the moment?
S- No, I'm ok
INT- Maybe what we'll do is we'll wrap up here for this session /S-mhm/ INT- And then in the next session maybe we could talk a little bit more in depth about your own sort of lived experience of when you actually are involved in practising tc
S- OK
INT- If that's alright?
S- Sure
INT- OK I'll turn the tape off.

Sally (Participant ID #4)

Interview Transcript #2

Date: Oct. 3, 2001
Time of interview: 10:30-11:30
Location: Sally's home
Atmosphere: Comfortable

INT- OK so today what I thought we would talk a little bit more about – cause last time we talked we um I got a bit of an idea from you about how you got started in tc and a little bit about your background, just get a sense of how tc fits in with your, your life

S- Right

INT- So today I just wanted to explore a little bit more about some of the actual sensations that you get when you practise tc

S- Mhm

INT- So maybe we could start from there

S- Mhm. Well, it's a form of exercise, so you feel the benefit of moving your body, and um, I suppose the discipline with the different positions and movements so that you're moving different muscles, bending joints in certain ways, and certainly the instruction in tc guides you to how much you bend your knees and what not to do to prevent injury and so on. So there's that kind of sensation of physical exertion and physical discipline I'll call it, Because you're trying to do the moves properly you're trying to position yourself the way you're being taught to, to do things. Then I think there is a sense of rhythm to your body, as you're doing tc because it is a set of movements and one movement flows into another so there's a sense of flow and a sense of rhythm, I think that I, I like very much, and certainly can feel.....If I'm not busy concentrating on looking at somebody else to find out what the next move is [laughs] - and I don't do that too much anymore with these sets because I, I have some sense of what the next move is going to be, so I do less of watching people for a cue, but that, that certainly is a part of what needs to be said here and that is, that if you're not sure of the movements and your working with a group, you're going to look close by to get some sort of a cue, and that, the cue may only be for a few seconds, but it's there. Um, however, we'll just leave that comment aside and we'll say, as you move through a set and you, you um begin to associate with that that rhythm and that flow, I find I can also, I can do 2 things: I'm concentrating on what I'm doing, and certainly I think in tc you have to do that otherwise you will forget where you are and you make the wrong move and we all do that. Um, so there's a certain concentration that I'm also very aware of as I'm doing tc, and that too I will call 'discipline' except it's a mental discipline as opposed to a physical one that I mentioned a moment ago. Um, but with that comes some sense of detachment...I hesitate to use the word 'meditation' because I think that takes you into a a different space somehow, but I do think that there is, with the concentration comes a detachment from the, uh, well the immediate environment, not necessarily the group, because you are part of the energy of the group, um, and maybe it's a detachment from other things that might have been crowding your mind before you got to the tc class, such as 'I must remember to go to Safeway on my way home and buy milk', to, one of your kids who, with whom you had a conversation on the phone and you know is struggling with something or other, and you're carrying that kind of problem issue around in your head, so that that the detachment,, I think, puts those things aside for awhile, and allows you just to stay with the tc, both in physical and mental state, and then I guess you'd say, a spiritual state, because I think that's what that detachment is, is sort of –

you've got the the body-mind-spirit kind of component with that. That sensation or the completeness of that is variable, from one session of tc to the other, and as we talked about last time, I'm not a practiser through the week, in between the classes, I tend to just do tc at the class. So um, from one given Sunday afternoon to the next given Sunday afternoon I can achieve that state to a greater or lesser extent, depending on what's going on in my like, I think, you know. Or maybe just the nature of the class that day, maybe there are more distractions, maybe it's broken up a little bit differently. But when, particularly when you're doing a whole set – practising segments of it, that's different because you know you're going to chop and change all the way along – but when you're doing a whole set, um - the best way to say that is when the beginning students are separated off from the more advanced students in that class and then the advanced students do the whole set- that's when I can feel what I have just described now. That's when I take away, that's what gives me some sense of um, rejuvenation, sense of well-being is improved, you know in my work with palliative care we like to know what the individual's sense of well-being is so we say 'SWB' and stick this on the chart, you know [laughs]

INT- Right

S- So my SWB goes up [laughs] – it's, it's better. On a zero to ten scale, zero being the best, it's probably at zero, rather than being somewhere further along that line, you know.

INT- Right

S- And you can – I can come to the tc class some days, feeling grouchy, feeling tired, feeling 'oh I've got too much to do, I probably shouldn't be here', or, 'Ugh, I'm not in the frame of mind to do this today, why the heck did I come?', um, but I know what takes me there is that I do enjoy it, and I do come out with that improved sense of well-being. And it takes a little push sometimes, but the benefit is always there. So that's...that's how I would describe it.

INT- Right. Ok. So you find that knowing that your um, that you're gonna feel better when you're done /S- mhm /INT- that's enough /S-Yes /INT- to draw you

S- Oh yes, oh definitely. And I would add to that by saying – and I said this in the last interview also – is that the forms of exercise that I do are the ones that I know I'm going to enjoy. You wouldn't get me in an aerobics class in a month of Sundays, you know, and just– that to me is not attractive at all. But, I know the benefits of tc, so – and I know that a certain amount of physical exercise per week is a, is important for one's overall health, um, so, I'll come to tc. [laughs] That sort of puts it in a nutshell.

INT- Yeah, Ok. From both a, sort of a health practitioner perspective where you know you need to get some exercise /S-yeah /INT- but also because you know that these are the ones you really /S-that I like and I enjoy /INT- Ok

S- and I feel good when I've finished

INT- Right. Now, what I would like to do to is I want to sort of differentiate between um doing tc itself and attending this particular class /S-Mm /INT- if it's possible to do that. So if, for example, this class was not available anymore, where do you think you'd go with the tc? What would you do?

S- Well, I've done Taoist tc in the past, so I might pursue um classes with them, to see how that worked out and if I liked that. My previous experience with those was not necessarily good – there were good features but there were some bad ones too. Um, but I would probably explore that again I – one of my TT friends is now doing a lot of tc with the centre out in the West End. So that would be one thing that I would explore, and I think the operative word here is explore. And I also know there's a group at the Cross, that meets twice a week in the evenings, and that's awfully close, geographically that's handy, so I would explore that one as well. And they do a different style again, something called Modified Yang style, and I have no idea what that is, but um, I think I would want to find another group, simply because I do find it so enjoyable and so beneficial. And I would look around and try different groups and find the one that was right for me. From the standpoint of learning the set and then, maybe even more importantly, do I like the group, is it a compatible group. Because this Sunday afternoon group has just been wonderful in that respect. There's a conviviality there and uh Mr. Chen does not place an overly high demand on the group of students, he makes it enjoyable, you know, those are important things.

INT- Ok, yeah you had mentioned that actually, the tone of the group /S-yeah /INT- was something that you found really attractive with this class

S- Yeah, yeah, absolutely. And that's sustained, you know, I've been there for 5 years and it's still there, it hasn't changed terribly, you know, so that that's very significant I think, you know, that's a credit to the people who are running the show, and I've said that before too. [laughs]

INT- Alright. I had one or 2 questions from the last interview and um, you ended up talking a lot about the concept of energy, both within the person as well as between people, within a group setting, and I think the emphasis was really a lot about the interconnectedness /S-yes / INT- between people. So, I wanted to just find out from you a little bit more about how you see the concept of energy within the person, and how that relates to tc. You might have talked a bit about it but could you /S-Can I say something more? /INT- go into a little more detail?

S- I'll try. Um.....as you know, I've been doing a fair bit of reading and done these presentations on tt lately, and as part of that reading, um, have delved into some articles that talk about the energy within the person, that there is a flow of energy in each of us. And that we try, as individuals, to keep that energy balanced, and this is what, in the framework of energy healing, is called good health. And that if energy is not balanced, then it's a state of illness or disease, and you can separate that word 'disease' into its 2 syllables, you know, 'dis-' 'ease'. So I think tc, allows that energy to flow in the individual, the set, the sequence of movements, one flowing into another, that overall rhythm and flow that I mentioned a few moments ago, are the vehicles for allowing energy within the body to balance again, to flow more evenly. If you want to look at that from a purely physical, even clinical, point of view, um, when you're practising tc on a regular basis, it's as good as any other form of aerobics and so on, in terms of muscle tone and improved circulation, and ability climb up mountains to go hiking or flights of stairs from the bottom of the river valley to the top, just to use those as examples. So there's there's a physical form of energy that is in a better state, because of the tc. But then let's go a little bit deeper and talk about mental health and spiritual well-being, and in terms of energy flow in the body, the tc has that benefit also of just, um, improving your ability to put thoughts together, improve – I use the word 'sense of well-being' which has a very – that's an umbrella term, you know. So I think that embodies the mind, emotion – the mind, the emotions, and the spiritual component of the person. And um, the tc movements, the rhythmic – the rhythm, the flow, the energy generated by that, I think is what benefits these inner things for the individual.

INT- And that – are you talking about for you, as an individual?

S- Yes. I kept that very third person, but yeah, for me, indeed.

INT- Oh, ok. Alright....You mentioned that, through your – just your daily life, you do some centering and grounding exercises. And what I was wondering was actually- is that something that was um, it sounds like, from the last interview, that you see tc as um I guess in a way representing some of that centering and grounding /S-mhm /INT-it's a type of exercise that does that /S-mhm /INT- or allows you to feel that /S-mhm, mhm. /INT- but also it sounds like you do the centering and grounding exercise at other points during the day without, for example, doing tc /S-mhm /INT- So I'm just wondering where that came from? Were you doing that before you even – your tt and Reiki? Were you already doing those kinds of things?

S- Not really, not really. Um...I think that many years ago...[stops talking while clocks chiming]. I have to say I think in all the years that I've been in professional practice, which is almost 40, I've been aware of the importance of finding a way to relax, and not only for myself, and maybe not even as much for myself, as trying to help other people do that. But in the process of that you're always on the lookout and always aware of techniques that people might write in an article, or do a small book about, or, and I can remember one woman in particular who was well-known in Toronto when we lived there, and this would have been about mid-70s I guess, who came and presented at a, an evening program that I was doing for the community college in Toronto, the George Baron. And um, then invited us to come to her studio and learn a little bit more. And she had a system of relaxation exercises that were not dissimilar to the bioenergetic exercises that I mentioned when we talked the last time, that were developed in New York by Alexander Lowen. And I think the awakening was probably there. Um, but I don't know that I consciously did a whole lot for myself, because I'm not very good about doing things for myself, I'm too busy looking after other people, um, until I started to to Taoist tc, in the late 80s. And one of the things that the instructors there would have us practise, was this neutral posture that I talked about in the last interview. And I think then, I really began to realize that if I did this little routine, that just consciously put myself into a neutral posture, and made sure, and I had the components of it right – took the time to do that – and it doesn't take much time, I mean you can probably do it in less than a minute – and then draw in a good breath, and let the old toxic energy flow out, just consciously do that as part of this assuming the stance you're going to assume - that you're doing something that is quite physical, but you're also doing something that is more of a visual exercise, to draw in good energy, let old crap go, that kind of thing. And again, if- you do it very quickly, but there's a bit of a rhythm to all of that too – so that you achieve that, at least visually, some flow of energy for yourself, that puts you into a better state, and so you center, so you feel your feet on the floor, you ground, 'alright, now we can move on and tackle the next piece of the day'. So, you know, you're not – I think we learn an awful lot by just casual exposure to things and observation, and then gradually we start to put pieces together and fill in the whole puzzle. And I think, in terms of describing what I have just described for you, that's what I've done – it's a transition over a long period of time. And it's a very simple way of just taking that moment so that you don't hurtle yourself into the next hour or whatever [laughs]

INT- Right

S- So I don't know whether that answers the question, but

INT- Yeah. Ok. And it sounds like for you that idea about centering and grounding- it's both a, a process as well as an actual – it you want to call it – experience or outcome

S- Yes.

INT- You achieve that sensation by doing - being centered and grounded

S- Mhm, mhm. And you feel more solid. You bring your self-confidence back into line, all that stuff.

INT- Ok....You had also talked – mentioned a number of times, the word 'flow' – the flow of movement when you do tc or when you watch it, the flow of energy inside your body. Can you tell me a little bit more about what you mean by that – are you talking about the same thing when you use it in both contexts, or are you talking about something different?

S- No, I think I'm putting the 2 of them together. Um, you know, um...consider if we're standing on the sidelines now, at the Multicultural Centre and we're just watching a group of people doing the Simple TC set for example. And they know it well so they can do it well together, and you can, you can really see the rhythm of the movements of that group of people. So there is that external, physical, observational kind of stuff that goes on. Now, put yourself into that tc group and you're part of this group doing these movements and so on, and there's something else that enters in there, um, there's the very – just the physical fact that your both, all moving at the same time, say there're 25 of us. But, within that, there is a flow that I think I just want to call connectedness, you know, that kind of thing. So, there, among the group of people- but it's also coming from somewhere, so it's going back somewhere, and I think that's where it's coming back into the individual, because, to quote one of the nursing articles I've been reading recently, 'you set an environment with, between yourself and the 'other'' now the 'other' might be that 25 people or it might just be the 2 of us sitting here, but there is going to be a flow of energy from inside me to inside that person and back again. So, if you embody that, there is the lovely, slow movement of the tc movements, the set...that physical part of it, and then the connectedness with other people as doing part of that. Now that's a group effort. Now what if you're doing tc on your own, which I've stated many times I don't do very often, but sometimes, I do, believe it or not! And I don't know how to explain that flow, other than on more than one occasion I've heard, maybe not you , but L__ (another practitioner) say, that if she's practising tc in her basement room or her living area, wherever she does it – at home anyway, that her cats will just come and be part of that. So even as an individual doing tc, and I've noticed this too, one of our cats will just come and park right at my feet, so there's got to be something going on, you know, some –and I have to call it energy flow, I don't know what other words to use – um that gets to the cat, so there's the connection with the cat as well. So it can be within, but it's around you as well, whether you're doing it individually or in a group. And if I'm on my own in the basement – you know, if I were better disciplined about this I could do tc in the Rec room every morning, and boy would I benefit from that! [laughs] I'm just too lazy to go down there and do it! [laughs] But I know on the occasions that I have...um, the sense of just having a more even balance of energy within my body is there, the centeredness that I talked about, the grounded feeling is there, um, a sense of peace, a sense of well-being. We finish the set and you bring your hands down to the side and it's a lovely, quiet moment. You know you're going to start off and do whatever else you have to do for the rest of the day, but um, and another way to describe it is as though you're wrapped up in a nice warm blanket, just for a moment before you throw it off and go on with your day, you know [laughs], but that's, those are all images I guess of saying, that's what I mean by flow of energy, you know, yeah.

INT- It sounds very comforting.

S- Yes, it can be, mhm, mhm. And that's, I think in energy work, that's what you're trying to achieve, is comfort, you know, you don't want to be jangled, you want to feel, put together well, when your finished. Tc does that.

INT- ...When you were describing a little bit about your experience when you do practise, you mentioned about that sense of detachment /S-mhm / INT- And I want to go back to that. What – I guess, um, do you notice things about how you...um, how you experience I guess the passage of time or the space around you as you're doing this, /S- mhm, mhm /INT-tc?

S- ....I don't know.........I think I'm pretty tuned in to the real world, the room , the people, the clock and so on, so I never quite lose my, my sense of attachment to those things.......You used 2 - time perception and, what was the other one?

INT- Sort of um, space or environment, you touched on that already

S- Yeah I have, and I have the same sensation when I um, when I'm doing the set with the group and that is that there's a cloaking or a warm comfortable feeling when you finish the set – just, just those few seconds of 'oh, isn't this great, this is soo peaceful'. And it doesn't last particularly, because you move on and do whatever, but, but that certainly is there. But I think I stay attached to the clock, I'm too Type A not to do that [laughs]. It's an interesting question for you to ask though, because it is a, is a measurement that is used in some of the research that is being done in some of the tt research as well, and that is, 'what is the recipient's perception of time?' How long did the treatment take? And similarly, the practitioner, how long did the treatment take? And ten measured against what the actual time interval was.

INT- How about things that go through your head at the time – you mentioned that sometimes you come in with, with a lot going on /S-and the jangle of the world, eh? /INT- Yeah. Do you notice anything right at the point when you're actually involved in practising, as far as um thoughts that go through your mind? What do you think about, if anything?

S- Hmm, I think about what I'm doing, um, there's certainly some degree of concentration on the set and what's the next move, and I think about my body mechanics quite a bit. Um...I'm very aware of the no-no's, the things that can – that you can do incorrectly that will-can be detrimental to body mechanics. It's something that I've always been aware of, that for years and years and years have been conscious of – I think it's a by-product of the occupational hazards of being a nurse and getting into mechanical difficulties like, lower back problems and so on. So it comes out of that basis. But I also think that I keep very aware of it for the simple reason that if you do the movements properly they feel better and you again set up that lovely rhythm as you move from one movement to the next. Um, coming back to physical problems, after injuring my back almost a year ago now, I'm far more aware of my stance when I'm doing tc, and particularly about keeping my abdominal muscles tightened up so that I don't come home with a lot of back spasm, and I can, sometimes, you know. So those things I think about quite a bit, and I'm quite disciplined about that. Um, I can come in with a number of things on my mind, depending on the day, and I know that I'm, I'm thinking about them when I first start off. But I do find, that over, say, even that, even the first half of the 2 hours, you know where we're doing the practising and so on...I let go of those fairly quickly. I think that's a good thing. And I'm just there, you know, the time capsule sort of thing 'this is this 2 hours and this is what we will do for this 2 hours and I know I'm gonna feel good when I leave, and those other issues are there but they'll just have to wait'. So I do some of that as well.

INT- Just sort of putting things aside /S-putting things aside, yeah / INT- Right. You're very focused

S- Yeah. Well, I like to try to be, you know, because I think that's how you benefit more from what you're doing.... And then of course, we just get socializing a little bit, and that helps to distract you from what baggage you might have brought in [laughs]. So we have to be real here too you know [laughs]. Or there's some event coming up and a great deal of time is spent in Chinese and then in English, getting that information across and so on [laughs]

INT- Well, I figured that's why you estimated that you practise about 1 1/2 of that 2 hours- [laughs]

S- That 's right cause that other 1/2 and hour is taken up with tea and chat [laughs]

INT- ......Um, ok.....I'm just looking to see here – I just had a couple of questions and things and just want to make sure that I checked with you about all of these things. When we talked a bit last time, about unexpected sensations or uh results from tc, doing tc, you had mentioned basically about some emotional releases that you had /S- mhm / INT- or what I'll term as that /S-mhm /INT- And, I guess, in the end – I'm assuming, from what I heard you say, that you felt that was a positive thing – but I don't want to put words in your mouth /S-mhm /INT- so, did you see that /S- as a positive /INT- as a positive thing?

S- Absolutely. Oh yeah, oh yeah, for sure. And I think some of what we've just chatted about now fits in with that picture as well, you know, the ability to put aside some things. And, but it can raise some things and bring things into focus, that maybe you had buried down in here somewhere for awhile, or muscles are released because you've been holding them and you know there's some emotional holding there and the act of physical exercise helps to release some of that. And then I think in the process of that, if there is a, an 'issue', we'll just call it that, quotation marks around it, um, you may gain some insight, you know, 'maybe that's what's been bothering me', 'Oh, that's what he was really saying, oh I must go back and check that out tomorrow', that kind of thing

INT- Ok

S- Yeah

INT- I just wanted to check because it sounds – I mean, sometimes I think when when people have an emotional release, if they're not really connected with what, what that's springing from, /S-mm/ INT- then that can be a negative thing just because you don't know what to do with it

S- Yeah that's right. And I wouldn't disagree with that for a minute. But I think I've done enough personal journeying and I'm grounded enough, that I tend to respond just as I did and you know, in those couple of scenarios. I would worry about the person who does have that kind of release – and you can – and not know what to do with it. That person needs some support.

INT- Yeah, but for you /S-Yeah, but for me it's /INT- you were able to put it all together /S-Yeah /INT- know where this comes from

S- The pieces of the puzzle, you know

INT- Ok, alright......Um, what I like to do is um, when we sum up, I like to get you to think about um, what you would, how you would define tc, I guess, or describe it, to someone who's never seen it before. So to give some kind of a picture of what this is really all about and, and uh what you feel it's really done for you overall, just kind of in a nutshell.

S- Mm. In a big nutshell [both laugh]. My response to somebody would probably be that it is a form of exercise, I would probably start off like that. But then I would quickly qualify that by saying that it's not a set of aerobic exercises, it's not a set of exercises where you're going to be moving quickly and bouncing up and down and being really vigorously active with your body. So I would describe it as a set of exercises that is a series of movements that fit into a larger set of movements and you'll hear practitioners of tc say, um, that they have done this set or that set, so it's a series of movements, some of them that are repeated, to do that whole set. You move very slowly, and you move very precisely, and you think about your position, one movement moves into the other.....hm, to give you the whole set – sorry I'm hesitating cause I got lost there....Um...and then I would go on to say to the person, 'if you see people doing tc' – and most people have, you know, they've seen, they've been to a class just to watch or they've seen people doing tc out on the street or in a park or something – and the question that usually arises, and that's why I'm going to go on talking this way, they'll say ' how can you get good exercise out of that stuff?' So I would go on to say 'it seems different to you, because it isn't aerobics and it isn't running, and it isn't walking quickly, but even though it looks like your not going to get any benefit from it, you actually do. You need to try it in order to see that benefit, but' I would put some emphasis on the fact that you do benefit from it, physically, and mentally and emotionally. Um, and I'd say 'I notice benefit in my muscles, I notice benefit in my circulation, I notice benefit in my tolerance for climbing stairs and other uh graded – like a mountain, and I just feel better after I've done the set. Yeah, you know, lots of things that I've already said, but that would be the kind of answer I would give someone. And I've had Homecare nurses ask me that so I could recall the conversation.

INT- I think that's true, I think a lot of people have kind of seen it, at some point in time, whether on TV or in real life

S- Yeah., TV often is the way, and they say – 'that's exercise?' – You bet!

INT- If somebody hadn't seen it though, would you um – what would you tell them it looked like?

S- ....hm, don't think I've ever been asked that question. [hesitant tone] This is an exercise in slow motion, um, a little bit like dance, um, think of the practise routines that ballet dancers do – you know where legs and arms and whole body are in certain positions and then move to another position. I think that's how I might answer that, I – that's a question I've never thought of before.

INT- You had mentioned that's something that drew you to it in a way was that when you'd first seen it too, and you liked the slowness of it and the moving in unison, so - and the music

S- And the music – the music goes with that, yeah.

INT- Um, somebody that I talked to previously had used um, a word, a term 'aesthetics'. Would you say that that sort of applies to tc at all? Or for you is that /S-doesn't fit for me /INT- completely different /S-yeah, yeah, no wouldn't be a word that I would have used particularly.

INT- Um, did you have anything else to add?

S- Something flashed through my head a moment ago, but it's gone now. So I'll – no, in a word. The thought will come back and I'll try to remember to write it down. [laughs]

INT- Ok. Um, well then maybe what we'll do is we'll finish here, and uh, I'll just turn the tape off.

Sally (Participant ID #4)

Interview Transcript #3

Date: Oct. 18, 2001
Time of interview: 13:15-14:00
Location: Sally's home
Atmosphere: Comfortable

INT- So um today I just wanted to first maybe go um, give you a chance to make some comments about the summary – if you thought that anything was really missing or um incorrect

S- No, you've done an excellent job of summarizing that and I know that's a hard job. First of all you have to sort of type it verbatim and then you have to do the summarizing from there. And um it reads very well and I don't s- nothing jumps out at me as being inaccurate and I don't think I need to supplement it particularly. The supplementing perhaps comes in the questions you've set out for today

INT- Right. Ok, no, that's that's good then. Right, so I left you with a set of um a few follow-up questions that go a little bit beyond what what was in your initial set of guiding questions but those are sort of things I started to think about after I was reading through everything you had said to me. How would you like to do this? Since you've gone through and sort of answered them, maybe we should-

S- Yeah, well I just numbered them 1 to 5 so I can answer them the same way and than that provides you with a consistent pattern.

INT- OK.

S- [Reads question 1]. Well I think my physical fitness is improved. And I noticed this years ago before I was doing this style of tc I was doing the Taoist tc, surprised myself one day by being able to walk up all the wooden stairs from the parking lot on – beside Grierson Hill to the conference centre, the Shaw Conference centre, and that's quite a hike

INT- That's a long way

S- And I just went boomdittyboomdittyboom and no problem at all. So that's certainly one – I fit the tc into part of my fitness and I know that it has improved my fitness and continues to do that.

INT- Mm, Ok

S- And, um, I think my overall self-confidence – and I'll deal with that __ a little bit more in another question. But that's certainly provided me with a better foundation, shall we say, of self-confidence. And then I think I feel some strengthening of connection with my spiritual self, and I know that one does this in a variety of ways, but I think the tc has provided one component of that.

INT- Mm

S- Um, yes, what I wrote down here was, uh [pause] I'm going to go back to your question [reads second part]. Hmm, not particularly easily, um transition is the operative word isn't it? Because if you view the journey of your life, shall we say, and you view the tc as part of that journey, I was probably going along this path anyway, you know, with respect to just who I am and how I view my fellow man and the world and so on. Um, but the tc has facilitated some of that, has opened up more realization of that path, and provided an opportunity for some of the growth that I probably wanted to do anyway. And the tc has contributed to that. Um, and if link back to pre-nursing or even nurse's training, I can remember being introduced to the concept of psychosomatic medicine. Now we're going back donkey's years here you know [laughs] this is 1958, 59, so that's a while ago. And this was, as I understood it, then a relatively new concept – now it's not new to us at all. But I think it pinpoints something for me, personally, it put the light on with respect to the idea of the whole person. And that I know in those days, psychosomatic illness had somewhat of a negative context to it. Um, certainly we've come a long way from any of those negative feelings, as a health care profession and as a society, but it pinpointed something for me, it put the light on and said 'there's something more than just the physical aspects of nursing care that I'm learning. I need to look at this whole person'. And it's a – and embryonic um concept I guess, and it just grows, little by little, as you continue through your life, you know.

INT- Right, ok. [pauses] You had said that um tc has in some way, has been a contributor towards this growth of um, a more holistic view maybe that you've had. Have you been able to – can you tell me what it is about tc for you that has shed some light on this for you? Is there something specific?

S- No, it's not something that you could spell out in a concrete specific fashion [pause]. I used the word 'openness' a moment ago. It's opened me to look at the whole person and the various ways in which we try to remain balanced and healthy. I think that's that's the best way to say it. It's not something I can put in a box at all, you know.

INT- Right, ok. Does any of it come out of things that Mr. Chen talked about? That you recall? I mean, I don't know-

S- Not really, I don't think. It's just being there and sort of absorbing, and pick up on bits of conversation or the – and I include all the teachers that I've had – and you just start to integrate some of that information and then, gain the insight from that information, yeah. [pause] Shall we deal with question 2?

INT- Yeah, that sort of leads into the next one.

S- [reads Q2]. Well, in part I've given you some ideas on that and by mentioning this lecture on psychosomatic illness in my nurses' training. Mm [pause] and I-I- when I was writing down my thoughts on this I said um, 'is there a time when you didn't have an holistic approach to health' yes and no. Has it changed my philosophy? Yes and no. I've harkened back to my childhood and my mother was the kind of person who um was helpful to friends and other family members in terms of being able to listen to them and discuss problems with them. And um, then I remembered that she used to call herself the armchair psychologist so [laughs] here I predate my nurses' training, obviously I was being exposed to the psychological aspects of one's health, you know, in my childhood, yeah. And then, from a very early age, I was interested in being involved in um the church that we belonged to, and I moved along in that church by being a choir member and a Sunday school teacher and all the other projects that go with a church community. So there again I think um there's a bit of role modeling there I like to help other people but I also like to participate in things that strengthen my spiritual growth and I think that goes with this as well, you know, this is the holistic stuff that obviously I was building into my into my own personal journey, even at that early age. There was a lot of the scientific and a lot of the linear too in my childhood, my father was a businessman, so you know, dollars and cents were big factor in the house. My mother liked science, liked to know about medical conditions, in detail, so you know that there was that kind black and white linear stuff going on too, but obviously it spilled over into the less-well-defined areas of of uh mind and spirit, just to stick to the terminology that I've been using here.

INT- Mm, ok. Just sort of a side question: how do you see, or uh, some people, from what I have read anyway,, is that um tc can be seen on a few different levels – it can been seen as more of a – purely an exercise, or something a little bit more holistic, um, as well as something quite spiritual – for some people it's like a spiritual experience. Do you see any complement or clashing of approaches between your tc and your actual religion? Or do see them as completely separate entities?

S- I think initially when I introduced myself to tc I probably saw them as separate things. And that goes back to that 1987 date that we've discussed before. But we're now 14 years later and if you look at that as a continuum, again, my own personal growth has gone from viewing my religion as strictly something that was structured and practised with um a specific doctrine to focus on, to being one of a creator and human beings as part of the world that the creator has made, and the spiritual component of – of everything. So its – I'm not very good at putting this in words you know, it's more what you feel [laughs] than you think. But I can remember saying to our parish priest, um, somewhere in the early 90s, 'There's more, there's got to be more' and we were talking about Christianity at that point, and we were talking about the bible as we know it today and interpretation of scripture and what this means in your daily life and so on. And then I would look at him and say 'but there's more' and I couldn't say what the 'more' is. In a variety of ways, I think I now define – shall I say a variety of ways? No, I shall say, I've had a variety of different experiences that have helped me at least conceptualize in my mind what the 'more' is. Um, and tc is one of those experiences. So I think that I now, rather than thinking of a god in the framework of Christian doctrine, am more likely to think of a god or a creator or the presence of the holy – these are words that I like – um as being a more um – I don't want to say global, that's not right – but a more all-embracing um idea for me that yes we can define it in terms of a specific religion, you know, Islam, Judaism, Christianity, and we can go on and on, but I think that I now feel that I'm kind of outside the framework of what I grew up with in specific terms, and think more in terms of a spiritual presence and a spiritual presence within the individual, that transcends those doctrines. And, I see tc as part of what helped me to do that. Just think it through, think it through. I hope that came out in a consecutive fashion. I got a little carried away there [laughs]

INT- No that's ok

S- You'll have to see how it looks when it gets typed up [laughs]

INT- So you'd see, so, sort of 2 ideas that I got from that is 1) you see religion not as just um just the doctrines and following that, but you see it as a much broader sort of thing now

S- Yeah

INT- And you felt that tc not only is a part of that, but it's been can we say sort of like a tool to help you get there?

S- Yes. A facilitator

INT- A facilitator? OK

S- Yes, Mhm

INT- Alright [pause while participant poured tea]. Well that's really interesting that -

S- And I couldn't – I couldn't define what the 'more' was

INT- right

S- you know, 8, 9 years ago, and I'm not sure I've defined it now, I think it's a work in progress and I think one of the important things to do is to remember that it can be, just an evolving process, that it doesn't have to have black and white answers at a certain time, you know.

INT- Ok. [pause]

S- We'll get into a religious discussion here [laughs]

INT- That's ok- /S- no no let's not [laughs]/ INT- we'll just move on /S- It'll take us forever, yeah

S- So question 3 – ok, are we ready for that?

INT- That sounds good

S- [reads Q3].

INT- So it says question 3 but it's several parts really

S- It certainly is. I think when you're a novice – and this is where I would put myself – you are um, busy learning the set. I mean there is those basic positions that we learn at the beginning of each new session, are part of that and then you see how those basic movements fit into the set as you learn the set, and I think the novice is really busy trying to put that all together, you know, and just ' I move this way, now what comes next? – Oh yes I move that way' and then the next week they can put 4 or 5 of them together with a little more ease, and the novice – and I certainly was – was simply doing that, you know just – that's enough. It takes all of your concentration to do that. Um, when you have had more practise, when you've been involved with a group for a longer period of time, and you, I think there's enough ____that you can integrate all of those movements and you've learned a set. And you've learned it well enough that you can with some confidence, go through the movements of the set without necessarily looking at your neighbour for a cue every time you move an arm or a leg, you know, so that it's more of a flow, and your body feels as though it's part of that flow. That's what I would call a an experienced tc person, who can feel that integration, uh the movements that the person has learned. Um, and then it probably goes a little bit farther than that because there's a bi – then you get into what's a bit more of the straight physical to the concentration that you know that you feel while you are doing the set, and then maybe that gets you moved into the meditative space too. Or at least the beginning of that. But those I call an experienced tc – those are the characteristics of a more experienced tc practiser [laughs]

INT- So where do you - where do you place yourself on that

S- Oh, it depends on the day [laughs]

INT- Yeah, ok

S- And that's being quite honest I think. I can certainly now, the 3 sets that we do on a regularly on a Sunday, I can do uh the Simple set um, and just – I lose the room. I just do it and it feels quite lovely. I can almost do that with with uh Moving Hands, but the third set, that long one, the Pushing Hands set, I am nowhere near that, I get frustrated because I can't think of a move.

INT- So you can be at a different level within the different patterns

S- Yeah, yeah. Now, the goal is to get to this wonderful spot, with everything that you know, so that you can just move with the set and forget the room as I said, you know, that, that would be great [laughs]

INT- Ok. You said 'lose the room'

S- Well, a moment ago I said, um, 'move into that meditative space'. So that's what I mean. Um, you are and you aren't in the room, you know, I – we, within the first interview I talked about being part of the rhythm of the group and the energy that flows with the group. And, certainly, that's part of what I'm talking about, that that feeling of you're all doing the same thing at the same time, you know, everything that goes with that. But at the same time there's no need for you to say to yourself, 'now what do I do next?' You know what to do next, the movements just come, with some nice even flow to them and you know what you're doing. So you can be, certainly be aware of the group that you're working with, but you can also be in some kind of um meditative space, or perhaps another way to say it is some sort of spiritual space, you can in some way allow that part of your being to be nourished by the tc.

INT- Right, ok. So, when that – that happens to you in the Simple tc, is that right

S- Mhm, mhm

INT- And sometimes in the Moving Hands?

S- Mhm, Mhm

INT- And, when that happens, you talk about being part of the energy of the group and that flow. Is it – are you are you more or less aware of your body, your actual physical body, at that point in time would you say? So you're talking about flow and energy so I'm starting to get pictures of almost that dissipating -

S- All these whirling things [laughs] Is it going in ripples or circles? Am I more or less [pause] aware of my body?

INT- Of your body, your physical body.

S- Oh more, I think, yeah. Because that's really part of what you're putting together, I'm going to come back to those nice 3 words, body, mind, spirit. And they work with some degree of harmony. So, in doing the set, I'm very aware of what my physical body is doing, mhm, mhm. And it feels good, and the better I work – the more I work at it to make the movements good, the better it feels. You can't separate those, can you, the mind body sprit thing, yeah.

INT- So then when you're doing Pushing Hands, and you were saying -

S- [groans, then laughs]

INT- you get frustrated because you can't get all the moves, how is that awareness of your body different? There must be something happening there.

S- Oh, yeah, physically, I think I tighten up, you know, and so I feel my shoulders tighten, and I feel my um lower back tighten, and then I notice that my coordination may be off a little bit, not a whole lot, but a little bit. And I don't keep my balance as well. You know what Mr. Chen would say about that don't you ? He'd say 'well you've gotta practise more'. [laughs]

INT- 'You have to do your basic steps more' [laughs]

S- That's right [both laugh] OK Mr. Chen, you're right

INT- I know that when I've done it, if there's something I'm unfamiliar with, sometimes my mind – like I'll start thinking a lot more about what's happening and how to catch up, or how to follow -

S- Mhm, yes, I think I do that too, yeah. And you run a big risk – and a lot of us will do this – and certainly I do – of being hard on yourself at that time and say ' Oh, for goodness sakes you should be practising more' or ' For goodness sakes you should know that, you've done it a hundred thousand times'. That doesn't help your integration of mind-body-spirit either. It also doesn't help you to learn it any better [laughs]. But that's a failing that human beings have, unfortunately

INT- Quite hard on themselves

S- Yeah.

INT- So my suspicion then, is that at that point in time, this is one of the things that will definitely differentiate somebody who's a novice or someone who's more experienced

S- Yes

INT- Is that this is not going on in your head at that point in time

S- Yeah. Or even if you do make a mistake when you feel more integrated, you just say ' uhh' and carry on, you know you don't belabour it.

INT- Ok, right. Um, let's see, So the next question is are years of practise an essential determinant. So do you think that um years of practise that's something that'll tell you whether someone's a novice or someone's an expert – say you practise for 5 years or 2 years

S- Oh, oh yeah, I think that's – yeah – and that's where I do agree with with the Mr. Chen's of the world and that is that if you are keeping your practise up on a very consistent level, it's going to make a big difference to, to um, feeling experienced [pause] but also feeling very comfortable with what you're doing.

INT- So what about some of these people who've been, you know, maybe come through only one set – like one one year, so one round of everything, but say they've practised everyday, compared to um, someone who's practised for 3 years but practises once or twice a week? What do you think?

S- I don't know, Maria [pause] there's probably more to it than just being there for [pause] a short period of time – a short period of time being a year or even 6 months which is the case for some people, um [pause] and maybe it isn't the practising everyday so much as it is to be consistent at whatever level you want to be, uh, in my case I do very little of course in the week, you know, I simply put that 2 hours aside on Sunday afternoon and say that's my tc time. Um, [pause] someone who's going to be practising the sets everyday, staying with it year in and year out, is in the best position, no question. The person who's been there 1 year and practises everyday – why did that person leave? What happened? Um, was it other factors in that person's life that prevented him or her coming back, or was it 'I really don't like this stuff and I've given it a fair trial I think – I don't know how to answer that other than that. Overall I think something like tc needs to be given a long period of time to determine whether you like it or don't like it. Um, go back to the days when we were doing it twice a week, um, 2 hours, 2 evenings a week. Um, we loved it, you know, and we would have stayed with it, but our family was at a stage where it wasn't going to work for us, you know, so it felt like a loss.

INT- Right. But even when you were doing it – so at that point, you were doing it more frequently than you are doing now, would you have considered yourself at that time an expert in that area? In that style of tc?

S- No, not expert, but, um quite comfortable, you know, by the time the 2 years was up, yeah, yeah.

INT- Alright, um, and then I think that was – we talked about the other 2 already.

S- Ok

INT- So, is there anything else you wanted to say in that – under that uh that question?

S- No I don't think so, I haven't got it written down anyway

INT- Ok, that's fine. And uh the other 2 questions were really just to clarify a couple term cause, you mentioned a few different words in in the interviews, so -

S- Um, 'Centered' for me, means bringing myself to my own centre, uh, to my heart space or my core, you know, we use those terms. Uh, 'peaceful' [pause] is being, feeling balanced and quiet inside. Now, you center and become peaceful I think, you know, the 2 kind of, they're not – I guess they integrated, but one follows the other, I think, my own way of doing things. Um, so in that respect I see a correlation but I also see a sequential something there, a sequence there

INT- So you do the process of centering, and through that you become peaceful, right?

S- You can feel balanced

INT- Ok, feel balanced. So, um, so you need to actually go through the process of centering to feel peaceful is what it is

S- Mhm

INT- So then if we relate that back to tc, is tc um a process of centering?

S- When you begin a set, and you position yourself with your feet at shoulder width apart, and um, you know that little break in your pelvis and the little break in your knees so you're not rigid up and down, and – I call that grounding.

INT- Right

S- So, I do separate out centering and grounding for sure, because grounding to me is more of a physical act, it's it is this 'neutral posture' that we talked about. And when you have done that then you can bring yourself to center. And you can't bring yourself to center with one foot off the floor, you know, just to use an example, you've got – the whole thing fits together – ground yourself, feel the solid floor – pretend it's nice warm dark earth if you want to, and I've used that image many times in my, in my tt practise, in my reiki practise. Um, but assume the neutral posture, then take yourself to your heart space, and I could even to your heart chakra, you know, the the heart center, um, so that you can feel the peacefulness of that and the balance that your mind and body then have, together. Um, and that whole thing you can do very quickly and very easily at the beginning of a tc set, because we do, we start off in that um neutral posture, so, ground yourself, center yourself, and then, the movements of the tc set begin. So you've already got some of that balance. And the tc set just enhances that.

INT- Ok.

S- That's what I feel

INT- Right, ok. And then, kind of one of the end products out of that is that you you feel centered and grounded still or more so?

S- More so, mhm

INT- ok

S- Provided you remembered all the moves [laughs]

INT- We'll just assume you did Simple tc [laughs]

S- Yeah, we're doing one that I know well, ok [both laugh]

INT- OK, right. And also, sort of a third product out of that is, is that peaceful feeling, cause you mention that lovely quiet moment

S- Mhm, mhm, mhm

INT- Ok

S- So does that help to clarify?

INT- Yes, cause I didn't want to lump them in together as the same thing if they were different.

S- No, I do see them as separate, but I do see them as integrated

INT- Mhm, yep

S- Does that make sense?

INT- Yep, it does. Ok, and then I – then the next question was about grounding, which you just explained to me, so that that sounds to me like that's different than bringing your self confidence back into line

S- Yeah, now, let me think about this a minute cause I did [pause] Yeah I think the outcome of feeling more centered, of feeling more peaceful, is that you enhance your self confidence.

INT- yeah [pause]. Can you tell me more about that – like I, I wasn't - do you have some example that you can give me about how it is that you notice that your self-confidence had changed? Is it your self-confidence in doing the tc?

S- No, it's self-confidence in a broader context. It's self-confidence in uh, just in life in general I guess and things that you encounter. If I use an example, [pause] um, I think the uh the best one is to describe – sort of describe an incident in my job and so I'll go back to the days when I was doing full time nursing and um I have had a number of positions where you're going to see a palliative care client, either in hospital or at home, and you know that a big piece of what you're going to do is to try and size up what's happening in that household – the assessment process in other words, and then try to come up with a plan that is workable for that ill person and the significant family group around them. So, um, I can almost see myself in a hospital situation where I'm, I went along the hall [eyes closed] knew I was going to have a look at this patient's chart, and then left the nurses' station to go and see the patient. And in the process of moving from the desk at the nurses' station down the hall to the patient's room, I knew that I needed to ground and center before I went in to that room because it was going to be a tough one. So, I see the self confidence as being if I'm aware that I'm not grounded, that I'm not centered, I will not handle this situation well and I'll give my own self confidence a battering. But if I take that 30 seconds to just do this little exercise with myself, and lots of people will say take a deep breath and then go into the room – I mean it's the same thing. Um, if I do that, then I go into the room feeling self confident, and I can handle the problems that are there.

INT- Right

S- Another way of putting it – and I've - one of my tt colleagues does this – she'll recognize that she's getting into a situation that is, dysfunctional, chaotic, so she will say 'I wrap myself in some protection". And I think really she's doing the same thing, I'm just framing it a different way, so and then you maintain your own sense of, of, your own self confidence to handle the situation that you're going to handle and do the best job that you can.

INT- So it sounds almost like it's a a bit of a 2-step process that you uh you find that you um find that you are more self-aware of what you need to do to make yourself more self-confident.

S- Mhm

INT- So, is the tc helping your self-awareness, or self-confidence, or both?

S- Both. Yeah, yeah

INT- Does that link back also to when you had said that problems seem less burdensome?

S- Yeah, yeah that would be another way of saying it

INT- That you have the self confidence handle those things that you need to deal with, the issues of the day or whatever

S- Mhm, Mhm, yes, mhm

INT- Right. [pause] Was there anything else that you wanted to add to any of those things?

S- No I don't think so

INT- Shall I turn this off?

S- Yeah, ok, we're finished, yeah.

Ben (Participant ID #6)

Interview Transcript #1

Date:	Oct. 21, 2001
Time of interview:	17:45-18:15
Location:	Ben's home – kitchen table
Atmosphere:	Comfortable, relaxed

INT- OK, so we'll get started. I was just looking over your background information and um now you were just telling me a little bit about how um your how your frequency of practise in tc was, so I'll just get that one out of the way right away

B- Ok.

INT- You were telling me at the beginning you were quite a, a very regular practiser

B- Yeah, I was very enthusiastic on practising cause I wanted to get, I wanted to get knowledge of the steps, you know, and I find, for myself, if I missed a class, I mean I missed a practise at home, you know, immediately after I had class, I'd have a heck of a time trying to think of what those moves were. So I found, for myself that if I come home and I practised the moves that we learned that day, it was more beneficial than if I didn't practise them cause then next week I'd have to kinda go back and rely on the old steps we did the day before. And then I get myself into hot water cause then, you know, cause you forget these steps, you get all anxious and excited, and you figure 'ooh, this is not the thing to do' eh, because uh [pause] let me see how I should put it [pause] with practise, you know, it's a lot easier to learn the steps eh, than if you don't practise, then you kinda run yourself into hot water and it's uh, harder to do the steps and everything like that.

INT- Right. So just knowing, for you, knowing that it would be easier if you practised

B- Oh, knowing if I practised immediately after I learned the steps, was a whole lot beneficial than just, you know, waiting a couple of hours, because, I have a tendency of forgetting eh, and if I don't review it, like whatever, then I get myself into hot water and it's a lot more work for my part, for doing these moves

INT- Right. Ok, so that was um, so you said, so then you were actually practising everyday at that point, or just right after the class?

B- Right after class, and just about everyday.

INT- Oh, ok

B- Ok, to keep up with it. Cause like I said before, Maria, that if I fail to do that eh, I'd uh, I'd lose my concentration and my steps, and then I'd uh, well then I'd have to put it off and say 'well I'll have to wait until next class', you know, to review the thing and then, as time goes on, you know, with every class, if you don't practise right after, you know, you get way more behind, and then it's a little harder to learn eh, then you get kinda discouraged

INT- right

B- and then you get scared if you get called up to do it in front of people, like 'Oohh, I -

INT- I think you do anyway [laughs]

B- So anyway, it's more beneficial that I practised right after class then uh, letting it go

INT- Right. So then, at what point in time did that, that tail off and did you start practising less frequently, would you say?

B- I'd say, after, oh, after about the second year, I started to taper off on practising because then, after that there's, uh, well once I knew all the basic steps eh, I didn't mind so much even missing a class, because then I could you know, catch up and it uh it would come to my mind quicker eth

INT- right

B- but like at the start Maria, the first time I started I'd have to do about a year and a half, or maybe 2, pretty close to 2 I'd say

INT- Ok, ok, right. So um, so now you just um, basically you are coming to the class for 2 hours on a Sunday, but you're there every week -

B- I try to be there every week, but my shift schedule in work, uh, I've got to miss 2 Sundays, or – now, how should I put that – I don't know how many times the Sundays would fall in a year, but I'd have to miss 2 consecutive Sundays, because of my shift work. But then any other time I'm there all the time

INT- Right, ok.

B- Because my shift follows, like I work 2 days and 2 nights, and, all those days are always shifted over one eh, so sometimes a Sunday falls on a night shift and I start night shift at 6 o'clock, so I can make the 2 night shifts, but the 2 day shifts I can't, you know, 'Kay. But I'd like to add to that, Maria, is that uh, when I first started this, I would actually [pause] I'd actually miss work, so I can do the 2 day shift classes at 3, eh. In fact, I would leave early at work, and I'd let the supervisor know that I'm gonna go to – I didn't tell him I was going to tc classes but I told him I needed this time for myself eh. So, the first year that we were doin' it, I been missin' a few Sundays, not all, but a few Sundays in order to uh, learn the moves, eh. It was very interesting for me to take this, I liked it very much and I wanted to keep up with it, and I didn't want to miss these classes, because if I, like I said before earlier, that to miss these classes I'd be behind, and uh, me being a slowpoke at some of these uh, moves we're learning, they take me, give me a harder time to catch up eh.

INT- Mhm

B- So, the first year was uh, diligent practising, same the year after.

INT- So tell me a bit more about um, about how you kinda got started, like what, what was it that um got you started in tc?

B- Well I was thinking uh, even before, 'you should get into some kind of an exercise' eh, us being older and that eh, this running and jogging I don't care too much for that, I don'' think it's very good practise anyway, running, it's hard on the feet and the cement and on your body eh, so. And we weren't doing too much for activity at all, at that particular time, which is about uh 4 or 5 years ago, even before that eh, we weren't doing very much – I mean we walked, you know, around the block or, 20 minute walks but uh, after us getting older, we should get into something other than walking, eh, and we didn't wanna run. And uh, and then Shirley, went to the doctor and she had troubles, and uh, he said take this tc eh. Well, that sounded pretty good, I had always wanted to take martial arts of some sort eh, and I figured the slow one would be the ideal one because uh, like uh older people can't take kung fu eh because it's kinda strenuous on their system and stuff so we have to think of something along that – I was thinking along that line, of taking something like tc, I'd heard of it, but I didn't really understand or know what it was really about, eh. So after Shirley went to see the doctor and, I guess about a month or 2 later, we were talking about it here at the table here and I had the Examiner eh, and I knew for a fact the Examiner had uh classes going on, in various things like dancing, and fencing and stuff like that. And the ad caught my eye on this tc held at Multicultural Centre. And the fee was uh, pretty good – I didn't know too much about fees then, I didn't know about classes either, different classes, but I figured, 'well, let's try this one'. And we were lucky, because we liked the class right off the bat, ok. And what I've heard later from other people, that other people taking classes at different, other associations, that the fees were higher, they were more stricter on their moves, and uh, I got the general impression that it wasn't a lot of fun, eh. Whereas this particular class that we joined, which was we were very lucky, I thought, and still think we were very lucky to go in with this class because, the people are very nice there, for one thing, and, when we first started the people were, even even the students themselves were very willing to help you out, you know. So, we liked that. And then of course we liked the music that went along with it, because that was, kind of, I thought to myself 'that's relaxing' eh - I mean you do something, you know you're running down the street and you see all these people wired into music and stuff eh. But when you're doin' tc exercises well now this is something that's a little different, which is, which is good eh. And I've heard from other people that other associations don't even have music to tc eh, it's strictly just the program and that's it. So this was nice. So we liked it. And we stayed with it ever since, and I don't think we'll go anywhere else, because we have a lot of fun doin' it, there's a lot – and we have these social gatherings that, you know, everybody gets to know each other at these functions, Chinese New Year's and stuff like that. And then you have these performances. I'm not too willing, to be honest with you, volunteer for these uh, so called performances at different occasions, puts a little stress on you, but I don't mind it, really.

INT- But you do perform a bit

B- Oh, yeah. I remember the first year, first 2 years, I guess we performed, right early

INT- I think they got you performing right away

B- That was a little tenseful because you always wanna do good eh, you always want to do proper moves and you want to look good eh, so. And then after that it was uh, more like a lot of fun, very relaxing, but I'll talk about that later.

INT- Oh, no that's ok. That's interesting that you mention about the music, really liking that.

B- Well, yes, you do. I like the music part, because uh, music is stimulating, eh, whether you listen at home or, like I said before, people running down the street and they're all wired up to this machine there. And with this, I guess it takes your mind off of a few things too, if you're tensed up and while you're doing these moves it totally relaxes you on these moves. And it's nice music eh, it's relaxing it's nice and – it's soothing. So it blends in with moves.

INT- So when you were practising in the first year when you were practising quite regularly, were you practising to music?

B- Yes, we were practising – in fact, we got Peter to get us the same tapes they have a the Multicultural then, we like the music and we've got 'em and we practise at home we'd put it on. Cause uh, to be honest with you Maria, they went hand in hand, the music and the moves went hand in hand, you know. If you were to do – like I find if I do tc without music it's not as relaxing – I mean it's relaxing enough but, but the music in the background eh, it uh, it sends you to a more relaxing kind of mood

INT- Alright, yeah. So, why don't you tell me a little bit um, about how it feels for you when you are actually in the middle of practising tc at the Centre. Can you tell me a bit about what it is you think about, or what you feel in your body and so on?

B- Well, ok Maria, when I first start, when I first start the moves, my mind is on gettin' ready. Once I'm in the – get-ready mode's finished, and I'm practising, I totally relax, which means that my mind doesn't think about anything. I don't think about the next move, it's all automatic, ok, and I don't think about a thing, you know. I just go through the motions, and it feels good, my body feels good, in fact, uh, there was a time here last week that uh, I injured my uh, injured my elbow eh, tennis elbow.

INT- Mm

B- And uh, I couldn't move it up and down or anything. And I didn't think I was gonna do good in class eh, I wasn't gonna make some moves that they, gotta use your hand quite a bit that uh, that I wouldn't be able to use the hand. I was finished that class, and I felt

100% better. I could move my hand the next day, and no problem, it was just like a miracle eh. And I thought to myself, 'well, you know, not only does tc relax you but it's uh, it's good medically' you know, cause if you've go aches and pains, sore back or whatever, and uh, that's what I find, so, like I said before Maria, once I get going, everything else just disappears, I don't think about anything, the moves come automatically, and it's uh, slow nice movements and, and when I finish I come back to reality

INT- Ah, ok

B- [laughs]

INT- Somebody told me the other day when I was talking to them that when they do it they feel like they uh, they use an interesting expression, they say they feel like they lose the room -

B- It's true. Yes, I would agree with that, oh yeah. Because uh, I don' think about anybody, in fact I don't even see anybody. I mean, I got people all around me, and I kind of, like a daydream world eh. Yet I don't think about anything or nothing, I just go through the moves and everything is nice and slow and smooth, and then I come like I said, when I finish that and everybody starts clapping their hands (at the end) kinda like you wake up.

INT- Ah, ok

B- That's what I find. So for me it's relaxing. And uh for me I'm lucky. Because I've been told I'm uh, like a daydreamer. See I can put myself in a special, special situation, if I'm stressed out or something, and I can think of the beach and water and I can actually hear the water, I can smell the water, and I can visualize very good, see. That's, so whenever I do tc, visualization for me to relax, comes naturally.

INT- Ok. Do any of those um, sort of images from visualization ever come into your mind when you do the tc or have you ever noticed that? Do you start daydreaming?

B- Uh, yes. That comes in, and sometimes if I visualize, too strongly, I lose my place in the moves. It's happened to me several times I get so relaxed, and then if I do have a vision, I have to look around to catch myself to see where I'm at. Because I lose well, I lose my place.

INT- Kay. So what do you envision, you know, at those times when you actually have lost your spot, like what are you visualizing?

B- Oh, ok, one example would be uh – mountains. Kay, I like mountains I like trees I like streams. And I can visualize the stream with the leaves falling into it, the smell of fall, you know, dead leaves if that, particular thing. And uh, that's one example, Kay, so, and another one would be, desert. I can feel the heat, I can feel the sand in my toes eh, when I'm doin' these moves. And then, like I said before, if I get too lost in this visualization and relaxation mode doing these moves, I forget where I am.

INT- And so you kind of have to-

B- I have to look around to see where we're at, to continue, eh. So that's how relaxing it is for me.

INT- OK. What about your, I guess your sense of time passing, as you're doing the tc?

B- I lose, I lose time. Cause I'm, when I'm doing this I don't uh, I don't picture it as a timetable or anything like that where I have to perform in a certain amount of time, it's just, when I first start, like I said – when I first start eh, I'm there, and then I get right into the moves and that, time seems to not exist. That'd be about the best way to put it, yeah.

INT- Ok. You've touched a little bit on some of the benefits that you feel like tc's had for you. Do you want to talk a bit about that, um, any types of benefits – physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, whatever you feel like you want to -

B- They're all there Maria, yeah, you hit on all of them, yeah. Emotional, uh, sometimes if I have lots on my mind, you know, stressed out for the day or whatever, you know, which is through work or whatever, or something, some kind of trouble in the family or whatever. So, when I do practise tc or when I take it at this uh, that seems to disappear. And for uh, physically, well like I said before, I had that sore arm, and that's one. The other one was, I had sciatica in my back eh, in fact I couldn't do tc because of that, but somehow or another I practised enough a little bit that I guess it worked itself loose and I've never had trouble with it before, and yet, some people say that this sciatica thing is a forever thing, you know, once you – is it a forever thing? [Looks at wife questioningly] tennis elbow is a forever thing, that's the one Maria.

INT- It tends to come back over and over again

B- That you don't get rid of, and yet, after – I've had people look at this arm and I had a massage therapist work on the right side, he cured that eh, but this one (left arm) I figured I might have to go back to him but when I went to tc and I did the moves a little slower than usual, I didn't strain myself, but as a rule the moves are kinda slow and soft anyway. And uh, next day it felt better, and then I practised a little bit and it felt better yet. So, and then, like I said physically it helps, even if y – I think, for people who have trouble, especially with their nervous system or sprains, you have to do some mild form of exercise, tc would be ideal thing.

INT- Mm, Ok

B- And, good for stress, like I touched on before, that if you're worrying about something, if you can get yourself in – you know, totally dedicated to tc, and, like I said before, you know, you have visions of this, you relax, your problems are forgotten.

INT- How about mentally, for you, as far as your, I don't know, any type of mental function that you want to think about. Is there, do you think there's any change for you since before you did tc, or it's all the same?

B- Well, yes, the first – before I even took it you know, I was always tense, never relaxed, eh. Always go go go, mad rush here there all over, you know, always just highballin' it. And then once we start taking tc, uh, that feeling kinda slowly, slowly would be the word, yeah, it slowly fade away. Because uh, I find when I do tc, it relaxes me, mostly, and when you relax you don't think about anything so stress is gone, and I find that it's very beneficial for me. Because then I don't think about anything I don't get tense up. And it helps, mind and body for me.

INT- Do you recall, did you notice those sorts of effects right at the very beginning -

B- No, not at first. When I was first taking tc, I was a little more uh tense on learning the moves, ok, that was always in the back of my mind I wasn't totally relaxed at first eh. But I mean that goes with anything eh. If you start any practise of any kind eh, it's just like a new job eh. Once you get into the routine, that thing fades and it turns out smelling like roses eh. But at first for me it was a little on the tenseful side, eh, learning the moves, doing good and that. But then once I learned the moves and that, and now, I find if I do tc it's it's beneficial this way for me that I can relax, mostly relaxing, and I don't think about anything and as for general things that go around me, like troubles and that, like we're having now in the world, they have that won't even fizz on me when I'm doing this eh.

INT- mm, ok. Some people talk about spiritual benefits of tc if they feel like that's happened with them – do you feel like there's anything – and I don't tend to define spirituality cause it's a very personal thing, it's whatever you -

B- Spiritually, how would I put it in spiritually – you mean religious-wise?

INT- If you like

B- The only thing that would affect me spiritually would be uh [pause] the Chinese religion like Buddhism and Shintoism, Taoism like that. That's about the only aspect of religious side or spiritual thing that I would think about. But uh, as a rule, not too much spiritually.

INT- Ok. I want to get back to that thinking about relaxation. You kinda really stressed that, and I was just wondering if you've done um like have you had previous training in relaxation therapy, as far as visualizing and all that stuff, muscle relaxation, cause it sounds like you really know that well.

B- Yes. No, to be honest I went to classes with Shirley. Shirley was more on the visualization thing. And I leaned – I was just a by-stander. But, the things that he was saying to the people that are involved there, and me being in on the side, I could picture myself being one of these fellas, you know, I could visualize no problem because I do it all – daydreamer is what it is eh, that's what visualization is daydreaming and I've been daydreaming ever since I was [holds hand a few fee off the ground]

INT- Ahh, ok, so it's from when you were young

B- So, so for me it's natural, except it kind of woke me up on this, cause the way he explained it eh. Cause as a rule, if somebody says 'daydreaming' what's that about, or visualization, I can't tell you. But he explained it to the class, eh.

INT- Ok. Um, what I'd like to do is um, I'd like to just ask you whether or not you experience any, I don't know I guess unexpected effects of tc, things that you didn't anticipate feeling?

B- Unexpected things

INT- Anything that caught you by surprise

B- Hmm, not really Maria, do you mean as to what I expected from tc, that kind of thing?

INT- Yeah

B- Uh [pause] well for one thing, I didn't think there was so many variations of it, that's the only thing I probably think of. Uh, as for the moves themselves, I was uh, I was kind of curious on how you would perform this, and I've learned that after 3 or 4 times that we went there it was based on something like Kung fu eh, and I thought to myself 'well, this is ok, you know, it's good slow movement and stuff, eh'. But anything unexpected really, uh, nothing to drastic, nothing drastic, I can't think of anything right off hand.

INT- Ok. So, what would you say it is that keeps you going to this tc group every week, even though, well you're obviously busy and you work shifts and everything else, what is it that keeps you coming back?

B- Well, besides the people that we know there, uh, I guess it's uh, the exercise, it would have to be the exercise, you know, because you know, now – we don't do any exercise at all, Kay, and uh, some Sundays I do want to miss, you know, but uh, that's far and in between. I like going there, I like doin the tc moves, and I find it's uh relaxing – I feel good after I leave, Kay. So that's what keeps me goin' there. And then uh, there's also – there was one time I did wanna quit, because it was gettin' boring for me, ok, repetition, ok. Ok, that's repetition, it got boring for me, and I'd like to learn, I'm the type of person who likes to learn something else, so I was threatening to quit but Shirley told me not to and, we're still there. But, the reason was, that Mr. Chen, he introduced us to the sword. Well now there was a totally different thing to do tc with, ok, so that kept me interested and I kept going. And then kung fu come along. Well now I've always wanted to learn Kung fu this is the thing to know. So that kept me in there. And now that I've forgotten some of the steps I have to keep going back to refresh my memory. But otherwise, I don't think we'd ever quit. The bottom line is we wouldn't quit, you know. As much as we've learned the steps and we know them back and forwards and that, I like doin' them. It's, it's not just for the exercise, it's just for doin' it.

INT- Ok. So the last thing I'll ask you is, uh, I'd like you to just imagine – and maybe this is something that actually has happened to you – if you had to describe tc to someone who has not seen it before, what would you kinda in a nutshell, what would you tell them tc is and what it does for a person?

B- [laughs] I would tell 'em, you know my honest opinion would be? Shirley's laughing - old people's Kung Fu. That's the first thing when you said that comes to my mind is old people's kung fu. It's not a fast movement thing or anything like that, and if I had to describe it to someone I says 'if a person has any trouble, not sleeping, not being at ease with themself, or even sore, tc would be the way to go. Without causing too much strain on yourself, you know, that be the way to go' That would be my answer, old people's kung fu [laughs]

INT- Very to the point. Ok, Ben is there anything else that you wanted to add before I turn off the tape?

B- [pause] Well, in summary I'd like to say, that I'm glad I took this class. It's a fun class. Anything you wanna do, is gotta be fun. If it's not fun, you don't wanna do it. And I'm glad I'm taking it, and besides that, the social functions are nice after too, like the, you know, the BBQs we get together, you know, kind of good feeling thing. So, all in all, I would recommend it for anybody to, you know, just to get out and try something different, and, well, I shouldn't say different but, some exercise that people might like.

INT- Ok

B- that'd be it Maria

INT- Thank you. I'll turn the tape off.

Ben (Participant ID #6)

Transcript #2: Written Responses to Follow-up Questions

Nov. 17, 2001

When you talk about how you concentrate on 'getting ready' at the beginning of practising tai chi, what do you mean?/What do you mean by "when I first start the moves, my mind is on gettin' ready". Can you describe in more detail what you are thinking about when you are 'getting ready?'

Just before I start or begin to do tai chi, I try to loosen up physically and mentally. Physically – I do the warm-ups. Mentally I isolate myself from the surrounding area – examples – sight and sound, then I picture myself on. Refresh in my mind the beginning of each move.

You mentioned that your 'body feels good' when you do tai chi. Can you describe what it is about your body that feels good?

The rhythmic motion of the moves, makes me feel at ease and sooths my body and mind. I feel like on a cloud and my body responds

What effect has tai chi had on your hyperthyroidism or hypertension, if any?

Tai Chi for me is very relaxing, therefore it rids my body of the daily grind and troubles of the day

How much time would you say you spend doing tai chi per work shift?

Not as much as I would like t, but on the average about once per work shift.

Prior to starting tai chi, you said you were walking – how often did you walk per week, and for how long? If you are still walking now, how often and for how long?

Before Tai Chi – Everyday for about 1 hr. After Tai Chi – Seldom

You mentioned that "now that I've forgotten some of the steps I have to keep going back to refresh my memory" When did you find you had forgotten some of the tai chi moves?

Not so much about forgetting the moves, but getting them mixed up with other moves between the 3 different steps

Would you say that one incentive for keeping up with tai chi at the beginning was because you thought it would be helpful for Shirley?

Yes because of Shirley, but mostly I wanted it for myself

Shirley (Participant ID #7)

Interview Transcript #1

Date: Oct. 21, 2001
Time of interview: 18:30-19:00
Location: Shirley's home – kitchen table
Atmosphere: Comfortable, relaxed

INT- Alright Shirley, so looking over your uh your little background information sheet here, um, what kind of occupation do you have, what job are you doing?
SD - Well you know I when Ben and I got married, I haven't worked for over - what was it – 28 years and the Save on Foods store that opened at Londonderry, someone suggested why don't I go and put an application in...[talks about job till counter #42]
INT- So how long have you been that now?
SD - Since last November, I can't believe it-
INT- Oh, almost a year!
SD - -yeah I can't believe that I'm still there!
INT- Oh my goodness, oh ok
SD - It's just on the Friday and Saturday and it's usually 6 hours a day or 7
INT- Oh, ok
SD - But, I am tired that's why this year my legs, my arthritis has started to act up a lot, because I stand, I'll have a – usually a 15 minute break, and I'll sit down for maybe about 5 minutes and my legs are sore my knees are sore, they've been sore this week, that's why doing some tc moves I cannot bend like I'm supposed to because of my knees
INT- Oh, ok
SD - And then, where they put us there in the store, usually, uh the store manager doesn't like us to be in the front and that's – the front is the door coming into the store, where you greet all the customers and that's where you can really sell your product. But he wants you to be where the product is situated in the store and usually it's around the coolers and it's very cold there. And we get colds, sinus infections – I've never had so many sinus infections in a year.
INT- So, so with all of that happening, I notice you were saying here that you do some walking so now that you've been working, and standing all day, do you find that your arthritis bothers you enough that you can't do your walking?
SD - The arthritis this year has – I've had OA for a number of years in in my back the back of my neck, but it's gone into the bottom of my back there at Easter time I didn't go to tc – we didn't go for about a month or 6 weeks -
INT- I remember that
SD - -my back was so sore. And uh I started going to PT, and that helped me. And then with the stretches that they give me to do, they do help, soon as my back starts acting up I, I get down and I do those stretches and they do help. But my knees I got arthritis in my knees and my ankles as well.
INT- Oh ok
SD - And I noticed today, uh, uh, because I don't do tc like I used to, by practising faithfully everyday, and I know if I did it every day I wouldn't have as many aches in my knees.
INT- Oh, ok
SD - But my back is not too bad but it's my legs my biggest complaint right now.

INT- So you know that if you did your tc everyday that that you would find that you didn't wouldn't have as much problems-

SD - Oh yeah, I did it today you know and a t first you know when we were just doing those basic steps and that one that lunge you know where you put your hands out and then you lunge down, I can't get down, my knees are very sore, but then, once we got into the routine, they started to feel a little bit better.

INT- Oh ok

SD - ____ [SD and husband say something at same time and laugh counter 69]

INT- OK, well why don't we start from the beginning with um, now I've heard from Ben already and so why don't you tell me from your side about um how it is that you got started in tc, you were telling me a little bit about it

SD - Well, I I was, well I could be still nervous, a very nervous, shy person. And uh I would get into depression bouts and I was um, oh the was after C__(dtr) was about 4 years old, I got very depressed, and I was put on medication and this medication I knew what the pills were doing to me but they kept me on a high. And I didn't want to depend on this and of course your dr's going to tell you, 'no you won't depend on them' and I did not believe him, and but I kept taking the pills. And then I took them for mm bout close to 3 years. And one morning I woke up and I said 'No more' and I st – you have to gradually get off of them.

INT- Ok

SD - And I did. Then I was ok, and then, every once in awhile I would get in, depressed and that. So we went to this new dr. and he would give me some pills, you know, for a while, and he wanted me to snap out of it myself but he never told me how to. And uh one was uh we did go to this stress management class well that was a joke. Because, I didn't benefit from it and I took Ben (husband) for moral support, I said 'I'm not going to that with these strange people'. I said 'I'm not gonna say nothing' and I would go there and just like I wasn't there, I wouldn't say a word – everybody else was talking, and I felt 'no I'm not saying nothing' you know. And this visualizing, oh forget about me to concentrate, I couldn't visualize anything – he would put music on and he's say 'ok, visualize you know, you're on the beach' well my mind has wandered. You know, and Ben says 'Oh, I can daydream' I said 'Well I can't'. And I can't. And um, so then uh I went back to the dr., this was 4 1/2 years ago, and I said ' oh I need something for my nerves' and he said 'no you don't' and he was very abrupt about it and he said um 'why don't you join tc?' and he said 'I'm not giving you anything', you know, and I was just a nervous wreck so I came home and I said 'Ben he told me to join tc, what is that?' I had no idea what it was, whereas Ben knew what it was. And so, Ben just let it go, and it was about a month later, picks me up from church, and he says, 'you know where we're going today?' he says 'we're going to join tc' and I, just froze. Cause I was very scared. And I said 'no we're not' and he says 'yes we are' he says 'you're gonna do it'. And so I asked some questions where it was and that and ok we went. And I was very nervous. Whereas Ben, if it wasn't for him, I wouldn't be where I am today. He kept pushing.

INT- Oh, ok

SD - So we went there and it was a small class, and uh, the first class, I didn't know what I was doing. Went home, I'm crying. I says 'I'm stupid, I'll never learn this, I'm not going back' and he said ' yes you are' and he made me practise he says 'you go home and we're gonna practise' and it was a good thing he was there and he could remember things better than me. So he would push me 'yeah we're doing this' 'yeah you can do it'. The following week I go home I'm cryin' again I says 'I can't do this' he says 'yes you can' I was just so nervous and then, to get up in front of people. And I always thought 'Mr. Chen, please don't call on me' you know, [laughs] INT- Right. And he always does!

SD - Yeah [laughs] So it uh, the first month went by with me crying, after every class, because I felt I was stupid, compared to the other people. I felt they were always better than me. Ben says 'no, there's nobody better than you. They're just like you'. So it was, it took um, maybe three four months where I start to feel a bit more comfortable, and we would practise, everyday, it maybe was just 15 minutes or whatever, but we would practise, and he would push me, and he would remember the steps when I said 'what do we do now' 'we do this and uh' he said he uh, we got the, tapes, I think it was you that provided the tapes uh the video, and then the music we got from Peter because oh, oh doing it without music it's horrible, I don't like it- I have to have that music there, it is so relaxing. And we – we've heard there's tc classes around the city where they don't do tc to music and they were surprised 'you do tc to music?' There was the secretary from church she took tc over at the Northgate, Northgate Lions centre and it was an hour class and, he taught them tc and they they were mostly seniors there and, no music at all. And I said – so I gave her a tape recorded 'you do it to, music and see how relaxing it is'. It does make a difference

INT- What do you find is the difference for you with the music and without? Like have you tried it both – you've tried it both ways -

SD - Oh yeah. Oh it's it's, I can't concentrate that much when there's no music. When there's music it makes me very peaceful inside and I, just forget about everything.

INT- Right

SD - When there isn't music, I'm thinking about things, going on around me, and then I'm not concentrating on my steps.

INT- Oh ok, right. What about when they have the music that has some of the words to it – cause sometimes they actually have words and singing-

SD - mhm, mhm

INT- Does that does that distract you?

SD - If it's too loud yes, I prefer no singing at all.

INT- Oh, ok

SD - Just, just music.

INT- Were you um, you persevered very well considering that it was 3 or 4 months before you really felt comfortable

SD - It was. And then that first year, cause we started in March, and then Mr. Chen – it was after Christmas it was Chinese New Year. Well he got us to perform there at the culture centre there, and uh, if it wasn't for Laverne and Peter being there on stage I don't think I could do it and um, Eric was the other one who was with us. And uh, I though 'ooh I'm nervous' But after that, cause you would never get me on stage in front of people before.

INT- Right

SD - Not me. And after that, I have a little bit more confidence, in myself, and then the more I kept doing it, well my confidence built up

INT- Ok. So the actual, the performing part of tc has been helpful for you in a way

SD - Right. I'm still a little bit jittery before it starts, but, um, when was it that was last year, not this year but last year, Mum and Dad had come, to watch us perform, there at the um, was it Shaw center or was it the Agricom where we were at?

INT- Probably-

SD - Probably the Shaw, mhm. And uh, I didn't see my parents sitting there, you know with the lights and everything, but afterwards we met them and she says to me ' I've never seen you so relaxed' she said 'you weren't scared?' and I said 'no, when I'm up there on that stage' – mind you it took me a little while 'when I'm up there on that stage, you see the lights, I block those people out, I'm concentrating on what I'm doing, there's nobody else around' But she's never seen me so relaxed doing tc.

INT- How bout when you're um, when you're actually just in the class like no stress from the performing aspect, just actually when you're in the class doing it with the group. Do you get the same sensations? Of just concentrating on what your doing and not anybody else?

SD - Yes, except when I forget some steps like Pushing Hands I forgot some moves [laughs] so I have to look around and see what I'm doing. And that will make me nervous you know

INT- Mm

SD - But once I get into the routine, I can relax, and there were times I have done it at home, and the music is on, and I'm doing it I have gotten halfway maybe through Moving Hands, I got so relaxed I forgot my next step. [pause] I was relaxed

INT- Oh right, right

SD - That I had to stop and think 'what do I do' – that's how, that's how much I, relaxed I was

INT- Mm, ok. So um, what usually goes through your mind when your, when you're just doing the tc, when you're right in the middle of it?

SD - [pause]

INT- Do you think about anything?

SD - No I'm concentrating on what I'm doing, on my, moves. Otherwise I'm not thinking about the people around me or anything I'm trying to concentrate on my moves

INT- Right. What would you say is the I guess, what would you say you like the best or what are some of the things that you really like about doing tc, now that you've been doing it for a few years?

SD - Best thing I like about it? I enjoy it very much for an exercise which I never thought it was an exercise. I never classed it as an exercise, until I went for a bone density, and uh the technician says to me 'what do you do for exercise?' and I says - I don't like this aerobics – and I says 'well walk. and also I do some tc but that's not exercise' and she said 'excuse me?' and I says 'no that's not exercise' and she says 'oh yes it is' she said 'it's low impact' I says 'I never classed it as an exercise'. And um, I think I benefit from the exercise in that is has helped me, I'm not that nervous person that I used to be, I can speak in front of people, maybe not that well, and it has helped depression. That is one thing I, will always stress, it helps stress depression whatever. I will tell people that.

INT- Tell me more about that. How do think it's helped the depression, for you?

SD - because, um, I'm not thinking of the problems around me, when I do my tc. Sure I'll get depressed now and then you know, but it's nothing like before that I had to go on pills, and I did not want to rely, on pills to keep me going, that's no way of living. Whereas tc, besides exercise, besides health wise, helping my arthritis or my back problems or whatever, stress, Number 1 for me

INT- Oh, ok. So for you, has the hallmark of the depression been, kind of feeling anxious? Do the 2 go together for you?

SD - Oh yeah, mhm, yeah

INT- Ok, alright. Oh I see. Alright

SD - Like if if we miss a couple of classes you know like thereat Easter time – I don't know if it was about a month or whatever I missed, and I was nervous going back, because I haven't done it you know, and I thought 'oh what are the people gonna think about it?' Ben always reassures me 'don't worry about them' And then once I get back into the routine I'm fine.

INT- Mm, ok, sure. Um [pause] let's see, are there any other, I guess um any other effects that you feel or benefits that you feel you've received from tc? Cause we talk about physical benefits, mental, emotional, spiritual. Anything in there that you want to talk about?

SD - [long pause]

INT- So physically you said you find that it's been helpful for your arthritis, particularly for your knees, is that right?

SD - yes, mhm, and my back. My lower back and once, like I say if I haven't done it for awhile and it's sore to get started again, but once I'm back into the routine and faithfully doing it, it does help

INT- how so? Tell me a bit about what happens with your symptoms when you've done tc

SD - They gradually go away, they're not as – and then I can start bending a little bit more. But it's this year that my knees have been really acting up fro some reason, I don't know why. And when I did have x-rays on my knees there in July or August the dr. says 'well you'll eventually need a knee replacement' and I says 'oh don't you talk to me about that' I don't want anything like that. So hopefully we continue the tc that that would help

INT- Oh, ok

SD - You know and to strengthen the bones so one doesn't have to have surgery

INT- Right,ok. So you find it helps as far as pain -

SD - Oh yeah it does

INT- and flexibility, being able to bend

SD - oh yeah.

INT- Um, mentally, have you noticed any changes in anything to do with your mental functions like um, your concentration, your memory, anything like that?

SD - I don't know about memory but concentration yes I can concentrate better because like those stress management classes uh, the dr. was talking and it was going in one ear and out the other for me. Ben, he was absorbing anything, and me, I didn't care. I said 'that was the worst class' and- we went I don't know about 6, 8 weeks, and I said 'oh what a waste of time'. I didn't enjoy it. Maybe I didn't enjoy it because being with all these people – I can't remember, maybe 10 or 12, and everybody discussing their problems. I thought 'It's none of your business'

INT- Ok, right. No I think that's just interesting that one type of relaxation method um, really really wasn't your thing, and then this one you found you just took to it once you got used to it

SD - Once I got used to it but it took awhile.

INT- So, if um, if Ben hadn't been there with you do you think you would've been able to keep going?

SD - No.

INT- no

SD - No. I wouldn't have gone by myself. Never. He was my pillar. He had to push me. And uh he really pushed. You know, he didn't go with this me crying bit you know. [laughs] Oh no, he was very stern, he says 'you're going to do it'

INT- Ok. But your happy that you -

SD - Yeah I am

INT- persevered

SD - Yeah, because there was there was that time when he says 'oh' like he said he was getting bored with it. And I didn't mind it this repetitious over and over. See I didn't take the Sword, I wasn't interested in it, and definitely not that Kung Fu. And I don't want him doing it either, after that man, what happened to that gentleman. So um, um [pause] he said he wanted to quit and I said 'no we're still going to go cause I enjoy doing it' And then that is some form of exercise for us to do.

INT- What's um, what is it, for you that keeps it interesting then, that keeps you wanting to come back

SD - Well besides me enjoying it, and I enjoy the people – we've made a lot of friends. We've never had so many Chinese friends before – usually our daughter, cause she went to McLeod and then Steele Heights and all her friends were Chinese. And to this day they're still friends. And it seems, once you make a friend a friend with Chinese, they're friends for life. [pause] and uh, there's a lot of nice people there. And socially, you know the odd time that we get together, if we go to a banquet or whatever, and uh , we, we enjoy it

INT- Kay. No that sounds like that's a really important part for you is the people.

SD - Oh yeah they're well they're so nice you know. There were times at the beginning you know that uh, when Mr. Chen would call on me to go and show the moves or whatever and I did get upset with them if I made a mistake and they would laugh. And this had happened to me and I could just feel my face turning all red and I mentioned this to Ben and I thought 'geez don't they make mistakes and if they make a mistake I don't laugh at them, there's nothing to laugh at' you know and, Ben says 'well, just laugh at them' you know 'laugh along with them' and that really bothered me, if they would laugh at me, cause I didn't like that.

INT- Right

SD - I don't like to be laughed at, I like to do a good job. And it has to be perfect

INT- that makes it hard at the beginning

SD - yeah

INT- doesn't it? [both laugh] for sure

SD - Yeah it does [laughs] but then at the beginning you know when we started we had good instructors, mind you we were taught different there four four years ago. Now, the way they're teaching them you know Peter, um, they go at a much slower, and they're almost individually taught 'this is how you do' – this is what I'm finding, it's not like how we were – and yet our classes were smaller back then. They're so big now.

INT- They are very big now aren't they, yeah. So how did you deal with that, that whole thing where where when people make mistakes everybody tends to laugh about it, how do you?

SD - I was hurt when I come off the stage oh yeah cause then I thought 'well gee everybody makes mistakes why are you laughing at me?' and I didn't appreciate that, but I just went, stood back in line, and that was it.

INT- Right. And now, does it still bother you?

SD - They can laugh all – I might get upset you know. There was one time when I did make a mistake, I forgot what my next move was and they start laughing and I just turned around and I said 'don't you people make mistakes?'

INT- Oh, right.

SD - And yet, I I wouldn't laugh at anybody that makes a mistake up there. We're all learning

INT- Yeah. I think that's part of it, a lot of people have said that that's one thing that does draw them back is that you're always learning something else there

SD - Mhm

INT- Ok. Um, let's see what else. I thought that was really interesting that you had mentioned that initially like until very recently you only – you never thought of tc as actually an exercise

SD - No I didn't cause I didn't know what it was. And you know when Ben started explaining it to me, it still didn't register and even going there, I didn't think that was an exercise, I don't know why.

INT- But you, what did you think it was for specifically?

SD - I really don't know because the dr. he just said 'you go join tc for stress, for your depression' And this was what was in my mind you know it's for my depression and that I just never thought of it as an exercise

INT- that's interesting

SD - And if the dr explained to me – well I never bothered asking him what tc was, I just went and told Ben. And then Ben didn't tell me right away but he knew about it because he read about it. But now I see that it is an exercise

INT- So when you saw it the very first time, right, cause usually in one of the early classes Mr. Chen actually performs and you get to actually see a whole set. Again, you probably heard me ask Ben this, if you needed to describe it to somebody, what would you – how would you describe it?

SD - Well I wouldn't be good at describing anything, sometimes I'm stuck for words – I would ushow them I'd get up and shoe them and say 'this is how ____'[laughing] I would show them some of the moves. Which I did that time the secretary from church when she was asking about it and it was that – do you pronounce it 'Doist', tao – how do you pronounce that tc?

INT- I think they pronounce it 'Daoist'

SD - Taoist, and this was what she was being taught there at Northgate. And she asked me to show some of our moves. And she said 'oh no that's not how we do it' you know and I said 'no ours is completely different' and uh – she was considering coming there but she said Sunday's a bad day – for a lot of people it's a bad day. That's their day off or whatever you know, with their families, that they prefer during the week and whatever. So um, I don't know if I I'd tell them to join, give it a try, uh this is how you do it and it's lots of fun

INT- Right

SD - Especially at the Multicultural Centre. Because I've heard of other places where it's strictly business, there's no fun, it is business.

INT- Hm

SD - And here, we socialize, we have tea and you socialize with everybody and, we have fun, And we made a lot of friends.

INT- Ok. Is there anything else that you wanted to add, that I might not have asked about. That you've got a burning need to tell people about tc? [INT Smiles, SD laughs] what it is or what it's done for you or anything like that?

SD - I just stress the point that it's good for depression and health, for one being healthy, especially as we get older, a lot of people suffer from arthritis and it does help the arthritis if you keep it up

INT- Kay. Well I'll turn the tape off. Thank you very much

SD - Well you're welcome Maria.

Shirley (Participant ID #7)

Transcript #2: Written Responses to Follow-Up Questions

Nov. 17, 2001

You said you know if you practised daily your aches in your knees would be reduced – what is it that keeps you from practising daily?

SD- I'm distracted by daily chores, family life and work

Can you be more specific about your depression symptoms and how you believe tai chi has helped them? If you feel ok giving a real-life example, that would be helpful.

SD- I couldn't face the day, I would prefer to stay in bed under the covers and feel safe. I would feel sad and lonely most of the time. Tai Chi has helped me to relax and come out of my shell

Are you currently on any medication for depression or anxiety? Is this a change from before you started doing tai chi?

SD- No – I am not on any medication

Do you ever just listen to the tai chi music without practising tai chi? If so, is it just as relaxing as when you actually practise tai chi with music?

SD- Yes. Tai Chi music is very relaxing to listen to even without doing Tai Chi moves. The music relaxes my mind and body.

Approximately how much total time (in minutes/hours) do you spend per day or per week walking?

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
Time spent	15 mins	15	15	15	15		

Cathy (Participant ID #8)

Interview Transcript #1

Date: Oct. 24, 2001
Time of interview: 12:30-13:30
Location: Taoist Tai Chi Society – South Side branch
Atmosphere: Ambient sounds – car and pedestrian traffic on main road, person shoveling

INT- So maybe you could tell me a little bit about how you got started in tc.

CB- Well, I got started in tc. I always have been very active and I was doing x-country skiing and walking and cycling, then I had back surgery – it was quite a number of years ago, so but cycling didn't agree with my back. And then I have RA in my hands, and wrists, and I have OA in a lot of joints and, so, x-country skiing um I was starting to get scared that I would fall, cause you have the strap, you know, in your hand [motions to left thumb web space]. And so I gave, had to give that up so, only thing I was still doing was walking, and I didn't find that quite enough. And then our middle son who lived in Vancouver said to me, 'Mum you should do tc'. Cause he saw the tc people in the parks everyday. And so, after a while I thought, 'well I try it'. And I got really hooked at it right from the beginning.

INT- Right, Ok. So um, when did you actually start doing the tc?

CB- I started Taoist tc in January '94. And I started in external class and, and after a month I started already, feeling the results, so I joined the club and I started taking more classes – I still was going to the external class but I was also going to the club to do more classes.

INT- By 'external classes' that's something that's...

CB- Like we did classes at that time, at the Providence Centre – we still do external classes in Sherwood Park and for Continuing Ed.

INT- OK. So just outside of the actual -

CB- Outside and they're not a member and it's only a certain number of moves that are taught over a certain number of weeks

INT- Oh Ok, all right. So then you joined the club

CB- I joined the club and I paid my registration and uh, and um, and went to classes in the club and to practise sessions. And I found the more I did the better I felt

INT- Ok. So um, you were saying that you already felt something happen after a month there

CB- After a month I could feel already – because, when I, before I started, on this – I don't know if you want to hear all of this but anyway, as I told you about my arthritis, but I also had diverticulitis, I had Raynaud's disease, I had trouble breathing, and I had chronic fatigue and, I was just -

INT- You had a whole host of things

CB- Yeah, and I was on a lot of medication, and um, because of all that medication, especially the medication for my arthritis, I developed stomach ulcers, and then I had to take medication for my stomach ulcers. And so it was just a continuing circle, right? I, I used to go to Dr. Schbaniuk, and uh, he's an internist, um, he'd tell me, now' he'd call me Kit, and he'd day 'Kit I would be so happy if you got off that medication' and I said 'well I can't function without it' you know there was no way. But uh now after, I haven't taken anything for my arthritis for the last, oh at least, um let's see I've been doing it now for almost 8 years - at least 5 1/2 years.

INT- Oh really

CB- And, I mean, my hands still, you know once in a while swell up and they're sore but that will go away. And, I feel a lot better, I feel a lot healthier than 10 years ago, I can do everything now, and uh, so it's a, yeah it has been, just an amazing improvement.
INT- Mhm. So would you say that you're you're back to the same activity level as you were when you were previously quite active, doing your skiing and walking?
CB- Yeah
INT- Is that right?
CB- Yeah. I could easily do that, yeah
INT- Yeah, But now you don't have time for it
CB- I don't have time, and then I got rid of all my ski equipment so I wouldn't uh, I wouldn't start all over again because that would be about ____ to do that
INT- Ok. So, for you, it sounds like you were quite open to trying tc, it was just your son mentioned 'try it' and then you went. Did you have any reservations?
CB- Um, no I didn't have have reservations about it but uh, cause I, I had heard about it and I had seen it advertised, but you know, we lived in um, in Blue Quill, and, it was always at Whyte Ave. at night, and I said 'I don't want at Whyte ave. in the dark at night'. When this external class came in Providence Centre, it was only 5 minutes from my home. So that's when I tried it, and uh I really liked it, right from the beginning.
INT- Ok, so it was convenient
CB- Yeah, that was the convenience that started, and um, of course, as I said after a month I was on Whyte ave. anyway, but, um, so I, yeah
INT- So you'd said that you had heard about tc before then
CB- Yeah
INT- Tell me a bit about that, like, when do you remember actually getting to know what it was?
CB- I didn't really know what it was, you know. Just had seen the ads in the Journal and, maybe someone mentioned it to me – my son might have mentioned it before, I don't know. I don't – I can't recall.
INT- Right, ok. So, um, and were other people you knew taking it at the same time?
CB- No.
INT- So you just bravely went out -
CB- I bravely went out there by myself and I was the oldest in the class, and I felt really stupid, cause I thought well all these people were younger, and I always thought they knew what they were doing, and I never knew when I got home 5 minutes later I didn't remember what we had done, uh. So I remember that I said to my instructor one time, I said 'I'm too old I'm never going to learn this' and he said, 'Ah don't be silly the other's just pretend that they know something' [laughs]. And I'm the only one that's still doing it, the only one that became an instructor and none of the others continued
INT- Right. So, it sounds like you remember very well what it was like that first time -
CB- That part I remember very well, yeah
INT- So what is it that kept you going even though that first experience for you, you felt like you didn't know anything?
CB- Well, I think it was the instructor that gave me the encouragement. And then as I said, after a month I started feeling better, and once I started feeling better, you know, I wasn't going to let it go, and then I found out the more tc I did, the better I felt, you know. I mean, now I get tired of doin' a whole day of tc, but, that's a normal tiredness, well before, I, I could crawl in a corner and cry, without doing anything. And then I would be so tired without doing anything. So this is, for me it has been just wonderful. Now I must tell you though, that I was doing it for 3 months when I met Master Moy, you know, he was the founder of Taoist TC, brought it to Canada. And, every time he had – I went to his workshop here, well my instructor almost pushed me there [laughs]

– and I'm still very thankful for that, because Master Moy, has helped me right from the very first time, every time I went to a workshop he would give me encouragement he would give me corrections, he would personally come over and, you know, pull my hand in a certain way or push my leg or whatever, and um, so I'm forever grateful for him. I'm sorry that he has left us, but I promise that I will keep working hard and try to, to keep his memory alive.

INT- It sounds like it's had a very profound impact on you s that you have continued for so long and in fact even gone into instructing.

CB- Yes, very much so, and my instruction, it was again, you know, I never thought I would be instructing, they did, they did a lot of arm-twisting, and actually, in a sneaky way they, they got me to instruct. I thought I was going to assist a class and then, by the time I had said 'well ok, I'll try it' and then they said 'ok, Cathy is going to do that class' and I said 'no' but. But then they said 'you will be ok'. First class I was just shaking, that, yeah, that was, I started teaching in May 95 and I haven't stopped.

INT- Mm, ok. You said 'they', 'they' convinced you. Who is 'they'?

CB- Huh?

INT- Who was 'they' that convinced you to start teaching?

CB- One of the senior instructors, you know some of the senior instructors. And they kept saying 'you should start instructing'. So, and yes so I started and I've never stopped, I've been instructing all these years, and uh, first I was a beginning instructor now I'm a continuing instructor. And uh I'm also a Lok Hup instructor which is a different uh, different sets of moves and different – comes under the Taoist tc umbrella but it has um, different moves. Taoist tc has 108 moves, Lok Hup ___ it's taught in 2 parts the first part is 33 moves total part is 66 moves. So I am, I'm only allowed to teach the first half. So um, yeah so that uh...

INT- So what um, now you've mentioned 2 different um, if you want to call them forms, or, what other typed of tc or tc-related -

CB- Uh, Sword set

INT- Ok

CB- and the sabre set [shows sabre and sword] and this is my sabre and this is my sword

INT- Uh huh, wow that's nice!

CB- Neat huh?

INT- So you do the sabre and the sword and the 108 and the Lok Hup [clarifies pronunciation]. That's a lot to remember

CB- Yeah

INT- How do you remember all those moves?

CB- Oh I don't have any problem remembering it anymore.

INT- Um, maybe you could tell me a little bit about when you're practising tc, kinda what you're experiencing, what it feels like for you.

CB- What it feels like? Um, it feels very, I feel very quiet inside, I feel very much at peace with myself and the whole world, I, I don't know, it just feels, feels wonderful. And besides that, I, you know, I can feel um, it was discussed to practise, but right now, I'm at this point now where I can really work my spine I can feel my spine stretching and turning and, uh, uh, I can feel my organs moving from side to side massaging them.

INT- Yeah, I've heard from some other people they say tc is good for massaging your internal organs

CB- Mhm

INT- You think that as well?

CB- Oh yeah.

INT- Ok. That's interesting what you said about feeling your spine stretching -

CB- Oh yeah, yeah. You have to be at a certain level before you feel that. You know, it takes a lot of practise and a lot of concentration. Um, you know, we call it 'meditation in motion'. And that is probably called because, you know, if you really really go into what you are doing, not just doing it, because I have a lot of these people that herein the class that just standing [demonstrates looking around and outside] you know everything that goes out on there, instead of what goes on here, I mean that, of course you never get to that state. It's [pause] it's wonderful.

INT- Do you um, you were saying that, that people often are looking out the window – there's there's quite a few distractions, the traffic and people walking by and so forth. Do you notice those when you're practising?

CB- No

INT- You don't notice them at all?

CB- I'm not distracted by it. But then as I said, this takes, you know, it takes practise. I have been working on this class to you know, to do our sets together and, uh, on Monday, they did one set that I called out all the moves and they would stay together and they came back to me and said afterwards 'oh that was great! It felt a lot better'. So this morning the second set I didn't call it out but I said 'ok, you'll all line up, make sure the lines are straight, and never mind what's out there' So they did second set this morning was pretty good too. So making progress but there're always a few that don't want change so that's ok

INT- Hm. So, you've told me a bit about how your body feels when you practise. And um, what do you think about when you practise tc?

CB- What do I think about? Well I quite often think about Master Moy, 'kay. Um, well, I just try not to think too much about anything else, just visualize what I'm doing and what my next move will be.

INT- Oh, ok, so you picture in your mind-

CB- Yeah

INT- what your body's going to do next, is that right? Ok, hm. How long did it take before you were able to sort of tune out those distractions? And also to feel your spine moving? Like when did that happen for you? Was it all of a sudden?

CB- Um [pause] When I really noticed my spine it was probably the last 3 years I think, and uh, that I really, you know, felt it really, and was aware of it. Now I imagine that before you feel it you probably are doing it already without realizing that you are doing it. Um, I forgot your question

INT- Oh, the second one was about um how long did it take before you were able to tune out the distractions

CB- Uh, it didn't take me that long. And I think the reason for that was that I felt the health benefits, you know, after the first month, and starting in Providence Centre which was quite quiet and there was really no distraction going on there, so that might have helped too, I don't know but as I say, I felt the health benefits so, I really, um [pause] tried to keep my mind on what I was doing and to practise what I was supposed to practise, and, try to improve on what I was doing.

INT- Right, ok. Um, having taught for as long as you have now and been around many people doing tc, would you say that your experience, feeling the effects after a month, is that typical?

CB- [long pause] Um, that's a hard question to answer. I think anyone that would have done tc for 7 years, if they're really uh, really doing it, not just going through the motions, will have __health benefits, definitely, you know.

INT- So then, if they've been doing it for that length of time-

CB- yes

INT- consistently

CB- definitely

INT- right

CB- Now, mind you, I have such a long list of things and you know, and I was 71 when I started, so um [pause] you know, I always say, if Master Moy, if I hadn't gotten all the help from Master Moy, personally help from Master Moy, uh, hadn't been able to go to all of Master Moy's workshops – see I go to, when Master Moy was alive I, I used to go couple of times to Orangeville, I still do that, and but I would go to any workshop that would be around here, I would go to if he came here, or in Calgary or Vancouver or Victoria or Winnipeg. I would try to go to as many workshops as I could. And, um, [pause] that was probably one of the reasons why I go the help that I did from him.

INT- Mm, ok. But you were saying that you felt, you began to feel better right even after the first month, so quite early on really

CB- Yeah

INT- Um, have you heard from other people or is that your experience that -

CB- Some of my beginner students they sometimes tell me yes, that they feel um, that they can that they're more flexible, and that their balance is coming back, you know, beginners is only 3 months, so, you know, there are quite a few that uh, yeah

INT- Ok, so that they feel the benefits quite early

CB- No I know I 'm not, uh, I don't know what the word is, I'm not the only one that -

INT- Oh, so you don't think that you're the exception

CB- No, that was the word I was looking for. I mean, you know, as I said, having had so many things wrong with me when I started, and considering the age and all that, that's uh probably...

INT- Ok, Um, Maybe you could go into a bit more detail then for me about the benefits you've received in term of, um, the, I think they can be pretty broad-ranging so, you know, physically, tell me more about how you feel tc's benefited you.

CB- First of all, as I said you know, I got rid of my medication for arthritis, I was on 2 different inhalers that I had to take, 3 times a day I'm not even sure and I haven't used any of that for I don't know how many years.

INT- And that's because you were having trouble breathing is it?

CB- I had a whole bunch of these inhalers sitting there and one day I thought 'ok that's enough' so I threw them out. And my BP is fine, I don't have any trouble with my bowels, you know [pause] I have a lot of energy, and you know, as I say I always have been active so I could say well I'm more flexible and all this but you know, I always have been active so its uh – I'm sure that it has improved but you know, at least, if it didn't improve, it didn't go down.

INT- Right, right, ok. How bout um, mentally? Did you notice any changes yo how your thinking was?

CB- [laughs] yes and um [pause]

INT- you laughed when you said that [smiles]

CB- I feel that tc, for me at least, ok I'm just speaking for myself and I'm sure that a lot of people could tell you the same thing – it has changed me physically, mentally, totally. I used to be hard on myself and critical, and, I find now I thought things that were important, are not important anymore, and -

INT- Like what, what kind of things?

CB- Um, well for instance, what other people think of me, um [pause] if I'm not dressed up to the hilt, it doesn't bother me anymore, it was things like that. Money, is not that important anymore. I, I find all the things before I find now, that totally compassion, helping other people, and trying to, especially the people that are less fortunate and can't move as well as I do, that have difficulties, whatever way. And as you see, we have already there for the unfortunate people [looks towards box of clothing donations for Operation Friendship] down there, the poor people, um has become my main priority. And I feel that, cause I had a lot of resentment from things that had happened way way back, eh, a lot of resentment, especially against my father and also against my mother. Now I have come to realize that maybe that they didn't know any better, and that was the way at that time people were brought up and maybe that was the way they were brought up but it's not the way I brought up my children and I wouldn't want anyone to be brought up that way but, you know, things like that I have, again that's all past, forget about it, just try, try to be different person.

INT- So you've learned to let things go, would you say?

CB- Yeh

INT- [pause] Oh, ok [pause] Some people have told me they're able to um, things in their life don't seem as big of a burden-

CB- Mhm

INT- when they're doing tc. Would you agree with that?

CB- Oh yeah, definitely, yeah. This is what I say – what I just said, you know, letting things go and uh, uh, you know, like mow I don't think how I could cope with a sick husband if I didn't have tc. My husband has cancer and he has Parkinson's, and uh, it's not always easy, but I found, as long as I'm able to go to tc and go to workshop and do things_____

INT- Hm, ok. So you – when you were talking about that, it sounds to me like when you talked about the mental aspects it also wraps up with the emotional-

CB- Yeh

INT- some of the emotional stuff, right? Ok. How bout, some people have told me that they've had some type of, I guess, uh, spiritual effect of doing tc, spiritual being, whatever your personal interpretation is, be it religion or just your, something about your inner self.

CB- Uh, well, in that respect, I would think that um, I don't know I would [pause] I think trying to be um, um, totally compassionate and trying to help that I, does that fall under spiritual, I – I __ think it does

INT- do you think it does? Or do you think -

CB- I think it does

INT- You do think it does, ok, right

CB- I do think it does, cause some people when you talk spiritually, they think religion, and I don't, spiritually I don't really think about just religion, cause I'm catholic and I – you know, you could call it spiritually, I still talk to Master Moy, and I still feel that his spirit is around, and, I know that he's still helping me, that he's still looking after me

INT- right

CB- If you call that spiritual I don't know. I don't really know when people say 'spiritual – I don't really know what the meaning, what that would be.

INT- Right

CB- Cause I do meditating – haven't done it now for awhile, we – I do chanting sometimes, uh, that doesn't mean, you know, I mean, and I don't – as I say, I'm Catholic, it doesn't make any difference to me, I am not uh, uh, you know, I don't feel any conflict between meditating and chanting, even though the chanting is Taoist or Buddhist or whatever.

INT- Mhm, ok. So for you it's really, there hasn't been a conflict, it's meshed really well with other aspects of your life

CB- Yeah.

INT- Ok

CB- That's why I say I don't really know when you ask spiritually, what to answer to that question, what the real meaning is

INT- Yeah, and I thing it really varies from person to person, you know, as to how they interpret that

CB- Yeah, how do you interpret spiritual

INT- But that's ok, you've told me already you see it as something beyond just religion and you've talked about compassion and you thing that's certainly an aspect

CB- I think so. Because I don't see Taoism is not really a religion anyway, you know, and uh, quite often have, we have several instructors, not here in Edmonton, but in Vancouver there are 2 that have their master's degree in Taoism and they sometimes come out and give a lecture or I go there and you know they give a lecture on all this stuff and say 'well, some people say well, when you're Catholic you can't uh well you know we have a temple at the West End, I don't know if you've been out to the West End

INT- right

CB- you know, and some people say 'well you're Catholic you can't bow before a Buddha or before Goon Yam or whatever' um, we bow before and after the set, some people refuse to do that it's against their religion, that's fine, you know. To me, it um, it doesn't make any difference because I'm not seeing a god – like, I have 3 people in my class now that say the bible says you only bow before God', which the bible says, but you know, I can pay my respect by doing that and we do it to pay our respect to the master and his teachers.

INT- Right

CB- And, you know, and that, to me, that's all it is.

INT- So you do those things out of respect to the teacher, ok

CB- Yeah

INT- Ok, ok. You mentioned a bit now, a couple of times about tc being 'meditation in motion' and how you do some meditation yourself. Can you tell me a bit more about that? What do you mean by meditation

CB- By meditation? To sit quietly, sit in a certain way, you sit quietly, and well you can do it in different ways, you can either, try not to think about anything, just sit really quietly for a certain time and then several postures that you take for meditation and uh, or you can also meditate about something that is really bothering you, um, you know, try to get to say meditate and resolve it that way. Yeah, when we meditate we um, set a several positions, first you sit and [demonstrates] now you have to take your shoes off and your your watch off and the earrings and glasses and other things and then you sit on the floor. First it's a straight spine, and you look straight ahead but you don't stare. Then after 10 minutes or so, you put this there [x-legged sitting] and you tuck this one under this, and this is the second position, and you do this without disturbing the back

INT- right, ok

CB- And you sit on your sitting bones that does do several things, besides that you meditate but it also opens up your sitting bones which helps you in doing tc.

INT- Ok, so you see the 2 of them going together it sounds like

CB- Yeh

INT- Is that right?

CB- And then chanting is you know, it's uh, a good exercise for your lungs.

INT- Oh, ok

CB- Besides __it is for the people, the Taoist people or Buddhist or whatever, they know what they're chanting and I don't know what it means but um

INT- Ok. So how does um, so why – now you talk about meditation as being a very quiet-

CB- Mhm

INT- thing where you're very still. And then you talk about tc as being meditation in motion. Can you talk about that?

CB- Yeah. Ok, meditation in motion, as I told you before, when we started in the beginning, you try to be calm inside, you asking how I feel, right, I said very calm, peaceful, and you just visualize your next move. So you're really, while you're doing, you're not thinking about ' Oh my god, I forgot to pay that bill', 'oh my gosh I have to do this'', 'Oh my gosh', you know all this and 'Oh, what is this out on the street' you know, things like that.

INT- Someone told me that when they do tc they um they 'lose the room' that's how they said

CB- what?

INT- Like they 'lose the room' everything sort of disappears for them

CB- No. No I wouldn't say that. What I try to, what I have myself now and what I try to teach my classes is to develop what we call the 'tai chi eye'

INT- The 'tai chi eye' yes?

CB- And you know, have peripheral view, so that you see, so that you can stay together

INT- ok

CB- and people do things together

INT- So you're you're aware of people on each side of you is it?

CB- Yeah

INT- and all around you

CB- Yeah

INT- Ok

CB- And that doesn't, you know that doesn't take away from you're meditative work, it helps to keep it that way, ok. Rather than when you see one arm going that way and one leg going that way, you know, that's just distracting.

INT- Oh, ok

CB- But to say 'to lose the room', no. I mean you, as I said, you know, you try to forget about all your worries outside

INT- Right, ok, hm. Alright, um, did you experience any, I guess, unexpected effects when you started to do tc, or over the years that you've done it – anything that's come as a surprise to you?

CB- Well only [pause] the healing power that Master Moy had, and I give you an example of that there was one time, uh, the first time I saw him doing this to somebody and I didn't know what he was doing and uh, then it was about 5 years ago or so I had booked a trip already to Toronto I was going to Orangeville for a week long, but then I go to Orangeville always for a week long workshop, and uh, then I got sick, and I very seldom get sick, I was nauseated, I lost 6 pounds in a couple of weeks, I didn't know what was going on, I couldn't eat, I would get hungry and I would eat just a little piece of a sandwich. So I thought I probably had the flu or something and oh I better go see the Dr. and get something before I go to Orangeville. So, I go to my Dr. and told her what happened and she examined me and she said, 'hm, how long has this been going on' and I said 'oh about a week or so' and she said 'you're not going anywhere' and I said 'what do you mean? I have my ticket for Toronto' and she says 'well cancel it' and she said she felt a mass in my abdomen and I'm sure she thought I had cancer, you know, cause I had lost that weight. So she sent me for all cancer blood tests and I had to go for uh [pause] ultrasound and x-rays and I came back and ya that was there and they gave the cm by cm and you know, and she sent me to another specialist and do more tests and, oh first, right away she put me on antibiotics and then she did ultrasound. And then the specialist wanted to do more tests and I said no I didn't want it. I went back to her and she said 'well Cathy you have' and I said 'no, I'm going to do it my way' and she didn't ask what my way was, she said 'ok, I give you 2 weeks, and if 2 weeks you're still the same you have to" and I said 'ok, deal' So I'd heard that Master Moy was going to Calgary to do weekend workshop in Calgary

INT- Right

CB- So I quickly booked a flight to Calgary, I said to my husband 'I'm going to Calgary' and he said 'Is that ok with your Dr.?' I said 'I'm not asking, I'm going'. And so I went to Calgary and uh I told someone in Calgary that spoke Master Moy's language what had happened and so then Master Moy sent someone up during Tor Yus – now Tor Yus, I don't know if if you [demonstrates] - oh, you probably still know what they are

INT- Yes

CB- So we're doing Tor Yus, so then a while later Master Moy was sitting in a corner and I was still doing Tor Yus and so um a fell a from Calgary was saying you know had to pay attention and he said 'you saw what Master Moy told Cathy to do' and I – so I said well 'I would like to know what else I can do' and he said 'just do what Master Moy tells you' and I said 'yes I'm doing it but I want to get better and I want to know what else I can do' and so he didn't say anything more and Master Moy, he didn't speak much English but he understood every word, I'm sure. So I'm still doing Tor Yus and he's sitting there, [demonstrates] and all of a sudden I saw him coming up and I saw him walking and I know he was standing there (behind her) and all of a sudden, he hit me right in the stomach as hard as he could, and down he went on the spine. You know, I had surgery on my back done so this part [points to lower back] I'm sure he felt it that ____. And people in the room said 'as soon as he hit your stomach' they said ' your eyes were that big [makes open circle with thumb and index] 'and your whole complexion changed' So after that, then he pushed me and so and after that they said 'go rest' and then he had to lay down because he had spent all his energy on me right, all his chi, and he.... Next the people that I stayed with, and they all kept saying 'be sure you stay really warm' and next morning I woke up I was fine, I was hungry, I ate at lunchtime- the people in Calgary still laugh about it – they said 'look at Cathy, she had a big meal and she's having dessert' – now I hardly ever eat dessert and I felt really good. So then later on Master Moy – they have 2 rooms in Calgary. So I was in one room and somebody came and said 'Master Moy wants to see you'. And so he said 'tell the people what happened'. So I told all the people and I said 'well I start from the beginning, how Master Moy has helped me right from the beginning' rather then say you know what he did that's all [motions to stomach]. And uh, so I came back – now my husband didn't know anything about it – he picked me up at the airport and first thing he said 'what happened? You look a lot better'. And so I told him. Next day I came to the club – people couldn't believe it. And, whatever it was, is gone. So I had to go back to my Dr. So I go in to her and she said 'Hi Cathy, how are you doing?' and I said 'fine'. 'How are you doing?' I said I told you I'm doing fine' and she game me this look 'oh yeah, sure' and uh, she said ' you don't mind if I examine you?' "no, go ahead'. So she examined me and she said ' I don't believe this, what did you do? And so I told her, and so we talked 20 minutes about tc. And, you know, and even the last time when I was there she said 'tc really has been wonderful for you hasn't it?' I said' yeah it sure has' And you know it's um __. So, and I have seen him helping other people, you know, and and the thing was, I remember the first time that he hit someone, it sounded terrible and I said ' poor s-' you know I felt very sorry for the person, and I said to the girl afterward ' did that hurt?' and she said 'no, the sound is terrible but I didn't feel anything' and when he hit me right in my source I didn't feel anything. And I bruise really easy, when I [motions as if hand bumping against edge of desk] I have a big bruise, and I thought 'oh probably bruised all over' not one bruise.

[Tape change]

INT- Well that's a pretty unexpected effect.

CB- Yeah

INT- When was that? Like how many years had you been practising before that happened?

CB- [pause] let's see, Master Moy passed away 3 years ago, June, it was probably 5 years ago.

INT- oh, right

CB- Something like that

INT- Yeah, Hm. That's pretty amazing.

CB- Yeah, it was. And as I said the people here they would know and you know they couldn't get over it. Cause I know that I looked terrible when I went to Calgary, you know, I - and I felt terrible. But the people there that saw it, there was lots of people there that saw it happening, and they said ' your eyes popped out that big and' you know they were all amazed about this change in complexion and that's what my husband saw and that's what everybody in the club saw, when I came back. So, I mean it's a...You know, as I said, I still talk to Master Moy and I still believe in whatever this is, and this last weekend we were in Regina, on Saturday they had asked us, you know they have a special needs class there that one of the girls does and I usually have it Saturday afternoon. So we had a workshop and they only have one room there and they said would we mind, could we maybe help with the special needs class. And we said no we don't mind and they had this one fellow in a w/c sitting there [demonstrates his posture] and so I said ' what happened? Were you in an accident?' and they said ' no it wasn't an accident, I think he said that he had spina bifida'. And uh so he said ' well this hand I can move this hand, this one I can't move at all [left]' and I said 'oh well, we'll see, I think you can still move that hand' you know. He said ' no that's all I can do' um so I just felt in here [bicep] and it was just like a piece of wood it was soo tight. And I just kept thinking of Master Moy and I just massaged him very gently and I could feel his arm relax, you know, then I moved to his hand and he couldn't straighten out his fingers so I held him here for awhile and I put my hand over his and after about 10 or 15 minutes he straightened out his fingers, this hand was still and he could get this far with his hand. And his mother was there and I said ' come and feel it [bicep] She couldn't believe it it felt really nice and soft in there. And so I said 'well what about your legs?' and he said 'oh my legs I can't use at all I have to pull on pants if I want my foot [to lift leg]. And I said ' well ok I'd like you to do it without pulling it' So I again I touched his [hamstrings] I could just feel them relaxing and you know, his leg, just a tiny bit, and I said' Now just straighten out your foot' He said 'I can't' I said 'sure you can' And by the time I was finished with him he could bring his foot out here [extends it] and the I said ' now pull your knee back, pull your foot back in' and he could do it. And you know, this to me, I just was about crying, cause quite often we hear this well 'you people don't get paid, it costs you a lot money to do this' you know 'and all your time' and all this and that, but if you have something like that you know, I think that's more than anybody needs. It was just fantastic, just gives you such a tremendous good feeling that you're that you – you know I said ' well you know I've gotten so much out of it, try to give a little bit back if I can'. This was my opportunity there.

INT- That really had a strong effect on you

CB- Yeah

INT- It sounds like that's partly what keeps you going, is it?

CB- It does, yeah, it is. Cause you know, I get people and we have people come in here that you know come in with a cane and can't lift their foot or they're very unbalanced. If you work with them if you, but you have to, you know, very be patient and show that you really care for it, and eventually they will you know they will relax and they do things. Because you know I have 1 lady who's 84 in my beginner's class and when she came she thought 'but I can't do this and I can't do that' I said ' ok that's fine, don't worry about it. By the time you're finished you can do it' 'You think so?' 'Yeah, so don't worry about it. When other people have to kick, just bring your foot over there, whichever way you do it, don't worry about lifting it up' You know, if you just give them confidence and without knowing it one day they will lift it.

INT- Over the past years you've really done a lot with the tc, both from being – first being a student and doing it for your own health and then teaching it and then you were saying you know how, you your finding you get a lot out of it with the patience that's required to help other people and so on

CB- Yeah

INT- Yeah. Often one of the questions I ask is why is it that that this never gets boring for you if you do it everyday-

CB- Never, ever. No. People sometimes tell me that uh, you know I that work too hard and I probably do. Like I go, ___ I know I was just run down, and doing way too much. And uh, but no, I love what I'm doing an I told my family I said 'if I drop dead doing it then you know I die doing something that I really love'. So it's uh – no as I say, you know, it has helped me so much physically, spiritually if you want, mentally, emotionally, whatever way you want to put it.

INT- Right, thank you. That's um, that was a lot of information that you gave me. Is there anything that you wanted to add, cause I asked you some questions, but is there anything that, else that you wanted to say to kind sum up? [long pause] Sometimes I ask people the last thing is um, how would you go about describing tc to someone who had never seen or done it before? What would you say, just in a nutshell, what is tc?

CB- In a nutshell, what is tc? Tc is a series of slow moving, yeah slow-moving exercises. Uh, can be done by anyone, regardless of age or physical condition, you can do it in a wheelchair you can sitting down, you can do it standing up. There's no limits, limits for anyone, anyone can learn it. And it has tremendous health benefits for everyone who really wants to try it.

INT- You have any last thoughts or any messages that you want heard about -

CB- What I really want more people to hear, yeah, to try it and do it. And you know, when they run that article in the Journal it was December, we had I think 175 people that uh signed up or at least came to the open houses I don't know how many actually signed up I don't think 175 signed up but it was a tremendous, and a lot of people signed up at that time. And it was just the article in the Journal. And I mean I have people here and there's still most clubs they still have this article up, you know I had a young guy in my beginners' class right now, a couple of weeks ago he had been over there [looks toward bulletin board with tc article about Cathy] and he came to me and said ' that's not really true is it?' and I said 'what do you mean that's not really true?' and he said 'well your age is not right' I said 'oh, yes it is' [laughs]. You know he couldn't get over it and said 'wow!' It's what I say, you know, in sometimes people will say about older people 'oh older people can't do this and that', and, I'm a wrong – usually someone say 'you talking to the wrong people' [laughs] I will say 'no, no don't bring age as a um, as a you know', I mean you can, some people when they are 55 they think that they're old, right, and they say 'I can't do this anymore' and 'I can't do that anymore' and by the time they're 70 they can't do anything anymore because they've told themself over and over that they can't do it, they can't do that. And I think this keeps me even so my years go [laughs] they count up but I think this keeps me young, and I feel a lot healthier, a lot stronger a lot younger than I did 10 years ago, and I probably look a lot younger too than 10 years ago.

INT- Ok, right. Well thank you very very much

CB- Oh you're welcome, I hope that hopes you with your study.

INT- I'll turn the tape off now.

Cathy (Participant ID #8)

Interview Transcript #2

Date: Oct. 29, 2001
Time of interview: 12:30-13:30
Location: Taoist Tai Chi Society – South Side
Atmosphere: Noisy

[On Cathy's request, reviewed her edits to transcript #1 with cassette recorder off]

INT- OK, so you've had a chance to sort of look over that summary, and um, do you feel ok about it?
CB- Yes
INT- Yeah, alright
CB- Yeah. I just put a few little changes there.
INT- But no glaring omissions or something
CB- No, no I don't think so, not that I can think of
INT- Alright, good. Well maybe what we can do then is we can sort of go over the follow-up questions that have come out after I've read about and thought about what you had said to me last week. Um, some of them just refer to sort of the background information. So, for example, I wanted to know a bit about how much of your time is spent teaching vs. actually practising?
CB- well I teach, for sure 7 1/2 hours a week and sometimes, 10 or 13, depending. Like, the last 14 days, I probably taught 30 hours cause we went to Regina
INT- 30 hours! – Because of your workshop?
CB- Yeah, I taught here the whole week and then I went to Regina did the workshop Friday night, Saturday all day, Sunday.
INT- Is that typical for you though? So to do something over the weekend where you're also teaching again?
CB- I'm usually busy on Friday night and Saturday. Like now, next month on the 30th November I have a day workshop booked here. And uh then that night I go to the West End.
INT- Ok, so that's teaching though, purely teaching
CB- Yeah
INT- Ok, so then – I just took this out so we can look at it together (Cathy's background info sheet). So when you're – this I'm assuming is sort of your typical, average week -
CB- Mhm
INT- is that right, of practise
CB- Mhm, yeah
INT- So then, out of this much time, how much of it would be your own practise?
CB- Well, as I say, I teach at least 7 1/2 hours, you know, that's the minimum. Cause I teach M, T, W, R morning, Tuesday night, 5 times 1 1/2, is that 7 1/2? [INT and CB calculate the total for 5 times 1 1/2]
INT- 7 1/2, that's 7 1/2
CB- And that's what I said, between 7 1/2 and I thought when I looked at that [the question] I'll put between 7 1/2 and 10 hours. And, you know, because, like last, last week, I taught 7 1/2 [starts mentally calculating], 2 1/2 – 8, 9, it was Friday night 2 hours – 11, plus Saturday morning 2 hours, so 13 hours last week.
INT- Ok
CB- After I cam e back from, from Regina. [laughs] So it's

INT- It varies a little bit eh. Bu um, so then the remainder of that time, for example on Mondays like the 3 1/2 hours, the remainder of that would be practise time for you
CB- Yeah, that's uh, and probably do more than – you know, I just take - approximate
INT- Ok, cause you had, um, you had said to me that you usually come in about 1/1/2 earlier than your classes, and I'm assuming that's when you're practise time is
CB- Yeah, and I, and I usually stay later, you know, quite often after everybody has gone, then I do sword or sabre or Lok Hup
INT- Okay, alright, yeah
CB- And I consider that all tc practise
INT- Yeah. So do you also practise at home?
CB- I do every morning first thing.
INT- Ok, alright, yeah. For how long?
CB- About uh, about 20 minutes I think
INT- Mhm, oh, ok
CB- I have done that for years now
INT- Do you notice a difference when you practise at home vs. when you practise in this environment?
CB- Uh, well there is always, there's always a difference when you practise along or practise with a group, 'kay. Um, when I practise alone I know I'm alone, you know, and I can do exactly, can just think exactly about what I'm doing. When you practise in a group, you try to stay together as a group, so it makes a little difference.
INT- Right
CB- And uh, Master Moy always encouraged people to work in groups. You know that's fine practise by yourself, but the real practise should be done with other people, in a group.
INT- Why's that?
CB- Well, I think for one thing, you um can see what other people do, right? And, hopefully you're all doing the same thing, but still it's different. And you know, hopefully thinking, um, same thing, and trying to make it all one, we're all working on the same principle, you know, on compassion, helping each other, opening our hearts, getting rid of all, all bad things, things like that. And if you work in a group and concentrate it works different.
INT- Ok. I notice some of the things that um that when you practising you think about, those principles I guess, the compassion and so on?
CB- Yes, I, I suppose so, even so you know it's for me it's not consciously that I'm doing this. But yes, it's um, if you can, I feel if I can help other people regaining health or regaining balance or flexibility or whatever, quite often people are emotionally upset you know, try to listen to them, try to encourage them to keep going. Um, tc is in a way it's – I don't know about any other exercise that would do this but tc will bring out emotions in people. And we sometimes see that all of a sudden somebody starts crying, yeah
INT- Is that right
CB- and it's just because all their emotions come out which is a good thing. And um, all the stuff that you have stored inside, all your resentment all your, it comes out
INT- mm
CB- doing tc. Or sometimes grief, you know people have lost somebody
INT- Right. So it can be quite an emotional experience it sounds like
CB- Mhm
INT- What do you do with that though afterwards I guess. Does the tc simply bring it to the surface or -

CB- it brings it to the surface and people learn to deal with it, you know. I mean, I always carefully ask if there's anything I can do – most of the time they want to let people work through it. If they want to cry, let them cry. And uh, sometimes they come and then they say 'I'm sorry' and I say 'no no no, don't feel sorry I know this happens to everyone' and, most everyone, you know. So, yeah, it seems to be – I'd almost say [pause] it doesn't sound normal but, almost a normal happening.

INT- Oh, ok, alright

CB- yeah

INT- So is that something that's more likely to happen when you're doing it with the group, or-

CB- mhm

INT- Oh, than if you're doing it by yourself

CB- Yeah

INT- Ok. Alright. Any other things that you find that is different between doing in the home environment and doing it here?

CB- [long pause] I don't know how to, how to put it in words, but yeah, it it is different and I've had a couple of people in my morning class commenting on it lately – that's you know that's funny that you ask that question – and, they say 'well, it feels so different when the class stays together' well, when everybody does their own thing, you're not, it's not one, it just like 40 people doing their own. But if they stay together and do it as one, they all feel that it's a lot more peaceful, and because it's more peaceful and you do your moves more gentler and relaxed so it's not forced and you're – I know for myself that, you know my inside, my internals are working more and I can feel my chi moving around and, uh -

INT- when you're doing it with a group together

CB- Well, if it – yeah – if if you are totally relaxed

INT- Right, ok

CB- I mean I can do that by myself too, I don't need the group for that anymore but – So I know when they tell me that they feel better when they, what they are referring to, yeah

INT- You said um you don't need to do it in a group anymore to be able to feel that

CB- No, I can I can I can do it by myself and be totally relaxed and really uh feel even more than when I'm with the group

INT- So what – when you're beginning tc then, is it easier to feel those things in a group? Is that what you're sort of alluding to?

CB- Yeah, in the beginning when you first run – beginning it's all external right, you use your big muscles, you use your big bones and there's, there's no internal movement really. You need the group to learn, you need the group to see even after you have learned the beginner's you still don't remember the 107 moves. So, you need the group for a long time as a beginner – just for you, so that you can do the set

INT- Oh, so that you're able to watch

CB- Yeah

INT- and see

CB- Yeah

INT- what everybody's doing and cue yourself

CB- Yeah

INT- Ok, right. [pause] and then once you know it, once you know the pattern well, is it uh, is there another stage that you get to where – because you were saying how you can feel things happening internally, and now you don't need to be with a group to feel that, and in fact, for you, you can feel it better sometimes without the group

CB- It's um, yes we constantly go through stages. We start at this level here and you constantly start trying to get a little bit higher, and first now, once you remember the moves, then you can start paying attention to how the moves are really done, you know, the um [pause while she searches fro the word] the details, yeah, you can pay attention to the details. Then you can – start trying to relax, which is not ea – which is very hard in tc, to relax, because you know they'll always _____ tuck the tummy in and walk straight and keep the tummy in, right? In tc you have to let everything go, you know, relax

INT- So physically-

CB- yeah

INT- letting the muscles relax

CB- [pause] Then you try to get your weight in what we call the bubbling springs – this part of your foot [points to the ball of foot]

INT- It's called what?

CB- 'Bubbling springs'

INT- bubbling springs, ok, in the the ball of your foot

CB- Yeah. There is a point on the ball of your foot and there's a point here [palm of hand] and a point on top of your hair [places hand on crown of head] that connects the meridians connect with each other and you try to keep most of your weight and push from there [ball of foot] so that the push comes through the bones – this is later on – through your bones through your pelvic area and up [draws a path from ball of foot through leg to pelvic area and trunk.

INT- Ok

CB- so this is also called a weight bearing exercise and that is regards if you really push from the feet, push through the bones, it becomes a weight-bearing exercise.

INT- Ok.

CB- So all these things you learn as you go along. Um, you learn to be very light, you know, have all your weight down below your waist, it's possible, so when you put your hands up your hands are like feathers, you know they don't weigh anything. Uh, what else is there [long pause while Cathy looks at hands and counts off on fingers different points]. And, gradually, you know, start working internally, and um so you start feeling your spine, cause once you do it internally, your spine not only stretches this way [vertically] also goes that way [rotates] and it stretches that way [horizontal shift] you know, it stretches

INT- ok, so rotating, and shifting

CB- yeah, it stretches different ways

INT- Oh, ok

CB- And uh, so once you get to that stage then of course you know, you then you feel really, internally and feel your internals being massaged your breathing's even and relaxed and – you know you don't have to think about your breathing. They still have a few people who have been told by somebody when you go up you have to breathe in and when you go down you breathe out and they [laughs] in Taoist tc we try to tell people 'forget about your breathing'. Cause if you do it the right way, your diaphragm goes up and down without you doing anything and that's all you need to do. And if your diaphragm keeps going up and your diaphragm keeps going down that's what's your breathing, and the more your breathing comes from this part of your body [abdominal area] rather than shallow breathing through your mouth or your nose, whatever.

INT- Oh, ok, ok. So it sounds like when you talked about the various stages, that's what – is that what differentiates someone who's beginner from someone continuing or expert I guess?

CB- Yes. See the beginner's course is 3 months. In 3 months it's just basic uh, they learn the basics, the 108 moves. Hardly anyone will remember 108 moves after 3 months right.

But they just learn the basics, and then they go over into continuing class where, if you will start learning the tc set all over again, you know, cause then they have to learn uh to sit to stretch, to spiral up to spiral down, and, that takes a long time for - lots of people, have a hard time probably will never learn to spiral up or down. And uh, yes that so slowly but surely you get into different levels and then you know, the more experienced you get the more you feel inside, the more you can relate to what a lot of stuff that is told to you you certainly of course you're doing it you listen to what I say yes, ok, you don't really understand or feel it and if you don't feel it's very hard to understand what they're saying, till one day you feel it and you say 'oh so that's what it is' then you can work on that part and so – Um, they say it takes 3 months to learn the set and a lifetime to perfect it and that is really true because you just keep on learning.

INT- Mhm, mm, ok. So there's no, there's no hard and fast sort of at 3 months you should be here, at 5 months, a year

CB- No, no. Because some people might learn the set in half a year to remember the 108 moves, others it might take 3 years or they'll never learn, and will never remember the 108 moves

INT- Ok

CB- So, you know, so it's just we have to set a limit to go through the basics and we have tried to do that in 4 months but that didn't seem to work out either, so we have gone back to the 3 months again.

INT- Oh, ok

CB- And it's basically walking them through the tc, through the 108 moves

INT- And then I noticed some of the people who I had spoken to when I was here last time, they had actually been here – they've obviously been through a few times, is that right? Because they've been practising for more than 3 months but they're still in the beginners?

CB- No that was continuing class

INT- Oh that was continuing class so that's why they've been there, oh I understand, alright.

CB- Yeah there's some people that do the beginner's class 2 times, sometimes 3 times

INT- Oh Ok

CB- And that's fine, you know, if they say they are not comfortable to go to continuing class I don't mind if they do that

INT- Ah ok, alright, yeah. So what would you say characterizes an experienced tc practitioner then? [pause] Like do you consider yourself expert or experienced now?

CB- To a certain level, yeah, I think you have to understand what you are doing and to understand what you are teaching. And, if you don't understand it, then, you can't really teach it either. And, I wouldn't say that you know, I still have quite a ways to go before I would consider myself a real expert, and, yes my tc is very good and I have a good understanding of most of the moves.

INT- Mm, ok. Tell me a bit about um how it is that you learn about some of the, I guess almost like theory behind the tc moves and so on. Is that something you learn at the workshops or -

CB- Mostly at the workshops, yes, you know I find that if you don't go to workshops, um, I don't see how anyone can really, really progress if they don't go to workshops. Caus at workshops – I mean, normally a class is an hour – beginner's is an hour an 1 1/2 I always do 1 1/2 most of the beginners' classes are a hour. The continuing classes are normally an hour except at nights, Friday nights for 2 hours or something, yeah. And um, you go to a workshop, you work from 9:30 in the morning till 10:00 at night, you know, they have breaks for lunch and for supper, but then - But you work a couple of days or whole week and it's no comparison to __ you can't learn that with just going twice a week to a class.

INT- It sounds very intensive

CB- It is very intensive

INT- almost like a retreat

CB- It is, yes. And I have been to Orangeville oh I don't know how many times, you know Orangeville is our big centre, and even so Master Moy is not there personally his ashes are there at the columbarium...so I feel like I still can go and visit him. So I usually go there for a week, sometimes 10 days, have a weekend workshop and then take the next week whatever, you know, Lok Hup workshop or tc workshop. Now I'm booked for next month I'm going to a sword and sabre workshop and uh so, I mean even so you learn it and you say 'yes I know it' you have to go and refine it if you will, that's maybe the best word.

INT- So what do they teach in the workshops? Is it all very practical or is there something else that you're learning besides the moves?

CB- Well they teach the moves, they teach uh make a big uh [pause] put a big emphasis on foundation exercises, teaching the proper form [tape stopped d/t locksmith at the door]

INT- You were just talking to me about the workshops and how, part of it has to do with refining the movements but I was asking what else do they teach you?

CB- Yeah, they also talk about really what tc really is, you know, how it works, and they um [pause] you know they quite often have medical doctor there, we have medical directors at the health centre, and they talk about how the internal alchemy works and things like that. They explain how things work, why things work that way.

INT- oh, ok, so that's really where you get a lot of your education about tc

CB- right

INT- it's not from outside reading or watching videos

CB- Well, it's also from reading, but there, you get it from people that have experience and work with it, and you can ask questions they can answer

INT- Right. No that sounds really, very in depth actually

CB- Yeah. We have, actually we have you know since 3 years ago they opened a health, a health care centre there, at the same, the same, actually it's in the same building. And the people, they don't have to be tc people, anybody can go there for a week at a time and there will be a dr. there and instructors go there to help, and to learn how to work with disabled people. So, as I said the disabled people don't have to necessarily be tc members, they can still go there and it's wonderful what's you see can happen there in a couple of weeks. The pictures that I showed you last week from the [tc for disabilities book] Daisy and Sunta I mean are just 2 people that you know, work now there as well, and help other people, because they have gone through the process themselves right, and people in wheelchair, or car accidents, you know, I've had strokes or whatever

INT- And they're using tc principles is it for helping in that case?

CB- Yeah

INT- Ok ok

CB- Yeah. And we have – I think there is 60 or 70 beds there

INT- Yeah

CB- People can stay for a week, it's usually a week at a time, but they have now, I think they do 2 weeks a month, you know that they have people in there. And they pay, I forgot what they pay. At first it was when the instructors stay – the instructors pay I think $150 for a week and participants pay $500 but that includes their staying there and includes their meals and everything so it's fairly, very cheap – for us it is expensive to fly to Toronto but, you know...and then it's I took the last year or year before, I took a health recovery instructor training with Alaister ___ this was mostly, most of the time the medical director was there and he would show us what he could do with certain people and talked about all different things

INT- It sounds like it's, the scope of the Society is quite broad

CB- Oh yeah

INT- Ok. Alright

CB- They also were trying – see before Master Moy died, Master Moy had wanted 3 things: he wanted the health recovery centre which was there before he left, and then cultivation centre, which they have finally gotten the permission to build it and they're working on it now on the foundation and they start building it next year. This will be a huge complex where they, people can go that want to study Taoism, they can go there and, just for practising, and they can go there to learn meditation, chanting, and it also will increase practise halls triple the size for what we have now because we have certain weeks of the year we have, close to 300 people there, at the same time, so they need bigger facilities. And they'll also have a huge temple and there's all the deities around

INT- Ok. So he wanted the health recovery centre, the cultivation center -

CB- And then he wanted – just before Master Moy died he wanted a long-term care facility. Now that we haven't gotten permission from the government to do this, and um, he said he wanted to help healthy people to keep their health, for sick people to regain their health and ill people to die in peace and to help them after death. Chinese really believe that – well, it's not only Chinese, but Chinese the way they present it is, you know that the spirit is not going to rest if, whatever if you have done something wrong until, and so with doing good deeds, um, doing chanting and stuff. I mean, other religions have the same thing, you pray for the dead and so it's...

INT- That kind of leads into my next question, and you probably read through some of the follow up questions. One of the things that you had talked about, I mean it sounds certainly like Master Moy has had a very profound impact on you, and you mentioned in your last interview that sometimes you still talk to him or you know that he watches over you. Can you tell me a little bit more about what you mean by that

CB- just exactly what I said. I really talk to Master Moy. When I come in, there's a picture of Master Moy, I always go and say 'good morning' 'good evening', whatever 'Master Moy' right, and I'll say 'please help me to keep your spirit alive, and help me be true to your teachings'. And I feel good that he's still with me

INT- That you get a lot of guidance

CB- and, as I said when I go to Orangeville now I go to the columbarium you know, his ashes are there, and for me it's the same, I mean people go to the grave and talk to their loved ones, right, so, I do the same as Master Moy, and I 'm sure that, that he's still [blocked out by sound of door being repaired]___ I'm convinced of that.

INT- Right, ok, um, so we talked about benefits or outcomes of doing tc, and one of the things you had mentioned was about um, well, I asked you about spiritual benefits, and you had a little bit of trouble with that word cause you really felt that seemed to not quite fit for you so I'm wondering about-

CB- At at that particular point, no, because when you said 'spiritually' I I somehow was thinking just strictly religious okay. And you didn't mean it strictly religious, I don't think, no

INT- no

CB- So after I had been thinking about it by myself and I – yeah, it's not meant the question was not meant strictly religious

INT- Right

CB- Spiritually – and yeas I think you get a lot of spiritual benefits out of tc. And I think you know with letting go of your resentments, whatever you have, uh opening your heart to people, you know, you know, to the world, uh having compassion, I think that is all probably comes under the spiritual benefits.

INT- Right, ok, it does for you? You feel like that? That's part of what spiritual benefits are
CB- Yeah, you know, as I said, I don't think you meant it to be a religious
INT- No, and that's why I asked you too before whether you saw a conflict between-
CB- No. no
INT- what you're doing here and your own religion, because I was trying to sorta get at that cause I wasn't sure
CB- No, because I was asked that before one time when that guy did the thing for the Journal and then he said 'are you – you said you're a Catholic' and I said 'yes' and he said 'are you practising?' and I said 'yes, very much so' and you know, to me, no, there's no conflict.
INT- Right,
CB- I think that is – we all believe in an upper being I don't know what you call that
INT- Like a higher being
CB- a higher being and whatever, and I think that anyone that, if you live right and do the right things ____
INT- some fundamental principles
CB- Yeah and you know, I was thinking the other day because I have learned to connect spirit mind and body, and also to some uh, it's not really an exercise, it's just a way of sitting, and to connect with the outer world, and I think in that way I can connect with Master Moy as well
INT- by connecting with the outer world what do you mean? Can you tell me more about that?
CB- like connecting with the outer world so, um, you know, like connecting with Master Moy, connecting with whoever you – people that have gone.
INT- Oh, ok. Did you, when you were thinking about that and you realized that I wasn't just asking about religion specifically-
CB- yeah
INT- did you come up with another word that you think is more appropriate?
CB- No, it's ok, it's just that at that particular moment when you asked that question somehow religion flit through my mind
INT- But you feel that that's an ok term
CB- Yeah, oh no, spiritually is [loud, repeated sound of lock repairs]
INT- Oh, ok, I just wanted to make sure about that, I didn't want to put words in your mouth. Um, when you talked about other benefits you had said how you'd gotten rid of quite a few of your medications
CB- mhm
INT- right, for arthritis and, so are you currently on any medication?
CB- Yes I still am on a little bit of medication because I had so much pain and so much trouble with my bowels that I am still reluctant to let all of that go
INT- right
CB- And, I'm taking half and sometimes less than half what the dr. prescribes for me, I take. But I'm a little reluctant – I keep telling myself I should try it and sometimes I don't take anything for a couple of days but I'm a little reluctant to , to let that completely go.
INT- right
CB- and, other than that, I take vitamins
INT- ok, but that's it now
CB- yeah, one aspirin a day
INT- Right, ok. All of your preventative health -
CB- then I take um – [very loud scraping sounds from lock repair] is that bothering you?
INT- It's going to pick up on the tape [laughs]
CB- I hope you still can hear what's on the tape

INT- I think it'll probably be alright

CB- We could go over there but then ___. Oh, I had a couple of times years ago that I ended up in the hospital with a blood clot in my arteries [points to hands], so they put me on, last time they put me on Adalat which I'm still taking – a very light dose of Adalat. And my circulation, it hasn't happened again so I think it's improved

INT- So it sounds like compared to what it would have been say 10 years ago,

CB- Oh yeah, yeah it's quite a big difference

INT- Ok. Yeah. I think the only other question I had asked you was sort of a an aside question was um if whether or not – now you had said to me at he very beginning when you started tc you went all on your own, right?

CB- Yeah

INT- Your husband didn't go with you

CB- No, My husband didn't go, I started out by myself and I started going to the club and the club was on the other side of the [looks towards Mill Creek] [sounds of repair people talking]

INT- of the bridge there

CB- and so, uh, he would – well, when I started going there he would drive me and he would sit there 1 hour or an 1 1/2 sometimes the practise session 2 hours, and then the instructor would say 'Bill why don't you try it?' So after 3 months he said 'I'm going to take tc' and I said d 'Oh? Right' and he said 'well, you look so much better I'm going to try it too' then he had a hernia that he had to attend to so he didn't – he did start – I think he started at the November class and uh, but he, is not a person who can get himself really 100% to it? You know, he's here but out on the street, and besides with his health problems, he hasn't been at the moment he's not able to do tc, but uh, he used to do tc

INT- well, he saw how you looked and it convinced him to try it?

CB- yeah, it was, just because I had improved so much. And, uh, I ___ while he was in the hospital at Misericordia for a couple of weeks and he was really really sick so I couldn't go to tc and you know, not done anything for 3 weeks I think, and then I said ' well I have to go back to tc' and he said a couple weeks later he looked at me he said ' you are so tired you should have a break' and I said 'yeah, I should' I thought no way I can, and he said 'why don't you go to Orangeville? You always look feel so much better when you come from there' and I said 'ok' but I thought well tomorrow he have forgotten what he said right? So I didn't do anything, couple days later her said 'what about Orangeville? Can you just phone and go?' I said 'you really mean that I can go? What about you?' He said 'I'll manage somehow' I said 'ok' so I phoned made arrangements [loud scraping sounds]

INT- right

CB- So he realizes what it does for me and he would love to do it again for his health , and hopefully...

INT- Ok. I think that was really all of my own questions. Was there anything else that you wanted to add after looking over your summary or now that we've talked a bit?

CB- I don't really think so, we just went over that – I guess these were the questions that you had

INT- Yeah , I think we pretty much went through them

CB- Oh, yeah, I had here um, oh, what differentiates between novice and experienced – well I I put there external compared to internal and we talked about that already

INT- we talked about that

CB- [reads over the other questions quickly] and you asked me if I read – yeah I have a whole slew [shows reading list]

INT- Oh, I recognize this one [CB and INT talk about tc books and tape is turned off].

Anne (Participant ID #9)

Interview Transcript #1

Date: Nov. 6, 2001
Time of interview: 13:00-14:30
Location: TTCS – West End
Atmosphere: Comfortable, relaxed

INT- Alright, so Anne, I got a chance to take a look at the background information that we talked about when we talked on the phone and I just had a couple of questions to get you to elaborate on. Um, the first thing was that I was quite impressed with your multicultural background [both laugh]

A- Yes

INT- And you had actually said that you grew up in Mexico

A- I grew up in Mexico I was born in Vancouver and lived there until I was 7 and my mother decided one day that she wanted to go to Mexico so we moved to Mexico and stayed for 10 years. Um, we went in 1951 and came back to Canada in 19 60. So I spent all my childhood down there

INT- Ok

A- Yeah

INT- So then when you came back, were you living in BC?

A- No when we came back, I lived in Montreal for 2 years, I lived in Ottawa for a year, and then I moved to Edmonton

INT- Mm

A- And then lived here for a couple of years and I got married and then we started moving around the countryside cause my husband worked for the government, and uh so we moved to Saskatchewan, spent a couple years in Saskatchewan, then we went to the Yukon, spent 5 years there, then came back to Alberta, then we went up to the NWT and spent 8 years up there, and moved back to Alberta, then we moved to BC and now we're back in Alberta again.

INT- You're well traveled! My goodness! [both laugh]

A- Yes, yes. The longest we've lived anywhere is 7 years

INT- Right, ok. And so besides traveling within North America, have you also been overseas?

A- No, we've been to Mexico, we've been to Columbia, but we seem to go North-South rather than East-West so we haven't been to Europe, we haven't been to Asia, although I'd love to go sometime.

INT- Oh ok. Now you were telling me that your background, um is now I understand is most recently in teaching is that right?

A- Yes, I'm a B. Ed in English and Spanish as a minor

INT- Ok

A- And I went to University as an adult, as a mature student

INT- Ok. So you did all your I guess it would be elementary school education in Mexico

A- in Mexico, yes

INT- And then the rest of it has all been in Canada?

A- Yes, I did elementary and high school, I graduated high school in Mexico

INT- Oh you did

A- Yeah, and then I transferred up to Canada and started doing everything else up here [laughs]

INT- Ok, was that a hard transition?

A- Culture shock, yes. I suffered culture shock for about 2 years after moving back to Canada. It took me a long time to adjust

INT- Well, I think that would be quite a big difference

A- It was a difference

INT- language and-

A- language, and just the whole thing, just you know, even the weather

INT- mhm

A- the weather was a shock the first winter because I couldn't remem – well, living in BC we didn't have bad winters and then coming back and hitting Ottawa and Montreal winter was "Ahh!" [laughs]

INT- It would be quite a shock. [pause] so you were teaching English as well as Spanish is that right?

A- Yes. I taught Spanish not in the high schools but but I taught it privately to adults. And then I taught English at Memorial for awhile after I graduated, so high school English

INT- Hm. Ok. And then you said to me that you had a diploma in Dental Assistance

A- That was the firs thing I got was the diploma in Dental Assisting at NAIT. The first graduating class at NAIT. 1965 no 64 graduated in 1964

INT- Right. And did you do some of that?

A- I did some of that too for a while. yeah

INT- Ah ok, alright. [pause] Ok, and then you had told me when I asked you about your leisure activity background there's a huge long list of things that you do!

A- Uh huh [both laugh]

INT- Besides housework which you consider physical activity

A- That's physical activity yes. Yeah. Walking the dog is a prime example of other activities, but yeah. I do a lot a needlework I do painting I do um, any number of crafty items and stuff like that. I enjoy doing it. And I do a lot of reading too

INT- Oh yes

A- Yeah

INT- Alright. You said you did um, it says that you did some writing also

A- Yeah. It's it's more personal writing but I used to write articles um, but wasn't all that successful at it being one of millions doing that sort of stuff. So, yeah, but the writing I do is mostly personal writing.

INT- Mhm. Oh, ok, alright, um, so maybe what we'll do is um, I'm going to ask you a little bit about some of those other activities that you've done that I, I believe are somewhat - I don't know, maybe complementary to to the tc discussion that we'll have. Because you mentioned to me that you've done some meditation

A- Yes

INT- And some relaxation therapy?

A- Yes

INT- and you've even tried some Chi Gong, right?

A- Mhm

INT- Ok. Maybe tell me a little bit about each of those and kinda your background in them

A- Ok. The meditation I was taught the meditation th – relaxation technique when I was about 11 years old, and I was taught it – I didn't know what it was when I was taught it. I didn't find out until later. But I was taught by a woman who was a – how do I put this – a native Mexican – she was an Indian. And she taught me this relaxation technique and it was simply a visualization, imagery, um, I would sit on the stair, and she would tell me how to visualize a place and then go into that place, and then that's where I would be safe. Ok, and so there was a very um elementary-type relaxation technique. When I was in that place then I would learn – I would try to relax all my muscles and just sit there and be quiet. At 11, 8,9,10 years old that's about all you can do, I think.

And then as I got older, when I was about 14 I was taught the muscle relaxation technique where you lie flat and you start at your toes and you start relaxing all your muscles, all the way up and you do the deep breathing along with it

INT- Ok. Not the one where you tighten and relax -

A- No no – you just you relax all the muscles

INT- Ok, yeah

A- Ok? And then um, when I was pregnant with my daughter um, the obstetrician was also into hypnotherapy and so he did – essentially combined the 2 techniques that I already knew [laughs] by, for childbirth. And um so that he had me visualize a place and then while I was in that place I had to mentally relax everything starting with the toes and going up and so on and so forth, so that's -

INT- So you were pretty expert at that already!

A- I was getting pretty expert at it yeah – and it did help during childbirth, um, because I guess I had done it so many years on my own. His sort of combining the 2 techniques, just made it that much easier for me

INT- Oh, ok, alright

A- And so I've used that technique you know, quite a bit, you know, at the present moment I'm um, a client of a psychotherapist – uh psychologist, and he has also, sort of combined those 2 techniques, with another technique, using more imagery

INT- Oh, ok

A- So I've sort of progressed beyond that. So I take all of these techniques and put them together and this is the sort of meditation I use. I don't always relax when I do it, but I use the imagery for meditation

INT- Oh ok. So you've had quite a long, consistent history of using relaxation -

A- relaxation yes

INT- techniques of one type or another

A- yes, yes

INT- Ok. And so when you talk about meditation now, is that what you're talking about is the imagery and the muscle relaxation?

A- The imagery but without the muscle relaxation, ok? So the imagery and the breathing, the breathing in breathing out, and focusing on the breath while in – I don't know how to explain this, it's really difficult, I've never had to do this before [laughs] If I visualize myself in my safe place, then I mentally am sitting there, and then I can do the breathing in and breathing out, which is part of the meditation but at the same time I've removed myself, in theory, or in my mind anyway, from my physical setting and I'm someplace else. Does that make sense to you?

INT- Yeah, yeah, nope, that's what , ok, I wanted to clarify. So then um, can you give me an example of something you imagine, to get yourself away from this place?

A- Um, sure. I have 2 places that I go to. One of them is when I'm relaxing, physically, ok – there's 2 different here: when I'm meditating and when I'm relaxing physically. When I'm relaxing physically, I go down a set of stairs into a, room, which is, has got a fireplace and a very comfortable chair. When I'm relaxing in the meditative state, I'm at the side of a lake – at a lakeside, sitting on a rock on the beach. So I have 2 separate places, that I use so I can separate which one I'm doing. If I'm meditating I'm at the lake, if I'm relaxing I'm in my nice comfortable chair in front of the fireplace, my on private room

INT- Right, ok

A- So that makes sense to you?

INT- I think so

A- Not too weird, off the wall? [laughs]

INT- No, no, I just think it's interesting that you have such a clear separation between meditation and physical relaxation

A- Yes, yes

INT- and that you see them as very separate-

A- they are very separate because, the physical relaxation, is used for pain relief also, whereas the meditation is, spiritual. So therefore I separate the 2 of them I don't find a – I don't really want to combine the 2 of them because I find it would just be too much for me. So the physical is one and the mental is the other – or spiritual

INT- Do you find that when you do one, or the other, that there is some overlap that you notice?

A- There is some overlap, but it's not a – it's not a conscious overlap on my part it just sorta tend to – the physical relaxation quite often comes in with the meditation. It's not the other way around, so that if I'm physically relaxing, trying to get rid of the pain, the meditation doesn't seem to click in but if I'm doing it the other way around then the physical relaxation comes along with the meditation

INT- Oh interesting, oh ok. Alright, no you paint a very clear picture actually, for me

A- Good. I've been trying to formulate this in my mind since we talked last, how I was going to explain this to you cause, to me, it sounds totally off the wall

INT- Well I think you articulate it very well, for whatever it is your experience is

A- Good

INT- And then you said you had said you tried some Chi Gong

A- Yes. I tried that, a little bit, through reading. And I found that, I think what I'm going to have to do is to go and find somebody who can teach it to me, because I'm not doing it properly. I can feel that it's not, it's not quite right? Like my breathing doesn't' seem to – seem to fit what they say it's supposed to do? So I'm I'm going to look into that. So that was just recent that I tried that.

INT- so, can you tell me if you can think back, where your – where did your interest come from, in all of this?

A- I have no idea. It's just been there. Um [pause] I don't know where it came from, It's just been there all along – previous life, I don't know! [laughs]

INT- Well it sounds like at least the relaxation stuff came from when you were quite young

A- Yeah

INT- you've just always grown up with it

A- I've grown up with that yes and so it's just become a part of me. And I use it quite frequently to get rid of pain I've used it many times after surgery, and then shocked the doctors because I'm up very quickly and feeling very good and my muscles don't seize up and I have all sorts of neat reactions that they don't quite expect so

INT- Oh ok. So you've had a few occasions to put that to the test already have you -

A- exactly, yes yes yes, very much so.

INT- Hm. So you've said that um you've said that you're in excellent health but you mentioned that you've already had a number of -

A- Numerous surgeries. Um I had a lot of problems um with fibroids, endometriosis, um, ovarian cysts, and eventually had a hysterectomy.

INT- Oh ok

A- So that was sort of an ongoing thing and every now and then they'd have to do a laparoscopy and see what was going on, and you know that sort of stuff, so, yeah

INT- Oh ok, alright. And then you said tat you do have OA that you know of

A- hm, yes

INT- in your cervical and lumbar

A- cervical and lumbar. And that's probably because I fell off the horse several times [laughs] they said-

INT- so previous injuries

A- They said they're probably caused by previous injuries, not necessarily just wear and tear, yeah

INT- Ok. And then you've also got the diverticulosis

A- Yeah, and that seems to be going away, with with all the meditation and the tc it seems to be disappearing into the background which is just find with me

INT- Oh yeah. Ok, we'll have to talk about that

A- Yes, yes yep

INT- Ok. Well maybe what we could do then is you could tell me a little bit about um if you - you know what sparked your interest in tc and and where you remember your first encounter with it?

A- Ok. My first encounter was a program on TV, and I' don't know what program it was, it was back in the early 1980's, and they showed people doing tc, in Beijing. And I thought 'gee that looks neat!' and you know, promptly forgot about it. And then in 1980 – now I've got to think back – it was probably '86, the TTCS was doing an extension course with the City of Edmonton, and they were teaching it at Jasper Place Co – uh high school. It was an extension course. And so I took it. And it was just a beginners, you know, 6-week think that they showed you a few moves. They didn't show you the entire set. And so um, I went and I thought ' this is great, I love it' you know. And then of course I was at university then and I couldn't make the time to come to class for the 3 month period. And in the meantime I had seen other programs on TV and heard some women talking at the university about it. So that's what piqued my interest. And so when I finally got enough time – no more classes no more exams, then I started.

INT- Oh ok, alright. Yeah because you had mentioned that there was sort of some breaks -

A- there's some breaks yes, because I took that little one-week extension course and then I didn't have the time and I had exams and I had practicums and just – your own life disappears when you're doing that, I'm sure you're aware of that [laughs]. Yeah, and so when I did have the time I came back to the TTCS. And then when we moved from here to BC, it was too far for me to go to the TTC and somebody in BC was teaching in the area, but she was teaching a different type of tc, and since I was still used to doing the Taoist type she didn't like what I was doing, and I didn't like how she was teaching, and so I just kept on doing the Taoist TC on my own. And then when we moved back here, I started up again.

INT- Oh ok. So when you were doing the TTC on your own, how regularly would you say you were practising then?

A- Probably about 2 or 3 times a week. And then I'd take the dog down to the beach and do it down there, you know, just, you know, or in the back yard or any of those places like that

INT- Oh ok, alright. So you said that you started here at this centre 4 years ago – approximately?

A- Five years –

INT- It's Five?

A- Lemme see what's this – yeah it would be 199[pause] 96 probably that I started here so it's alm -it's 5 years

INT- right. So how long would you say has been the stretch of kind of continuous practise?

A- This, this is, this stretch, yeah. The latest stretch yeah

INT- Ok. And then when you were doing it on your own you said it was about 2 or 3 times a week?

A- Yeah yeah

INT- Ok, alright. And how long was that for?

A- It’s about 6 years

INT- Oh ok

A- But that was without instruction so -

INT- but you were still practising though-

A- I was still practising it yeah

INT- Yeah, no that’s that’s a good stretch of time really that you’ve been doing it, whether on your own or with a group so, ok. Can you recall, you know, in your first experience of doing the tc at the extension course, or even when you saw it on TV that one time, what is it about it that really caught you?

A- I think it was the beauty of the movements, the the, it just seemed liked such – almost a dance, you know, it was just the slow moving, um, and – I don’t know how else to explain it except like a dance. It was just beautiful, I just thought it was absolutely beautiful, so [laughs] yeah

INT- Yeah

A- The other thing is too, that I have 5 years of intensive ballet in my background, so I think maybe that might have sort of triggered something in my brain that said ‘ that’s like ballet, that’s like dance’

INT- Ok, ok. Um, hm, and now, though, now that you’ve been doing it for a number of years, if you needed to describe – and maybe you have had to before – If you needed to describe tc to someone who had never seen it before, what would you – how would you describe it to them? Kind of in a nutshell, what is tc for you?

A- for me it’s walking meditation, and it’s also a way of becoming familiar with my body, so that I can move it and keep mobile, and also, when there is something wrong with my body, I’m more aware of it because I’m more aware of what my body feels like. You follow what I’m saying. In other words I know what my body feels like when it’s healthy, so that when there’s something going on inside that wrong, I can feel it. If I’m doing tc and something doesn’t feel right and I have to stop and think ‘why does that not feel right? Is there something wrong? Is my diverticulosis acting up? Or Is my circulation not what it should be?” because if my hands are cold and they don’t get warm when I’m doing tc then I know there is something pinching the nerve, or something like that. Does that make sense?

INT- Mhm, ok

A- I think there is a word for that, but I’m not quite sure what it is

INT- Are there any other things you’d like o use to describe tc to someone?

A- Well, um [pause] let me think for a minute here – you want to turn that off so it doesn’t doesn’t run through [pause tape] I could describe it as a series of slow, movements, which are almost like a dance, and which make you aware of your body, and, which keep your body healthy. Ok? They stretch all the muscles, and the joints, and they keep you flexible. I don’t know how else to put it.

INT- Does that sum it up for you?

A- That pretty much sums it up for me yeah.

INT- Ok, alright. Um, maybe we’ll talk a bit about what you just said about walking meditation, I thought that’s an interesting term

A- Yeah. I’ve heard that term before and I didn’t understand what they meant by it, you know like walking meditation. But when a person is doing the tc set, especially if you’re doing it in a large group, and the group is together, working together, you do the set without thinking, your body just flows with it, and your mind, your mind just seems to detach. And you just do it without thinking. It’s an amazing experience I can’t explain it any other way! It doesn’t happen all the time, and it will happen occasionally when I’m doing it alone, and I’ll just get through a set and suddenly say ‘I’ve finished it?” You know, I’d I reached a certain point – you lose track of time. You just sort of –

you're *outside* of time. That's where the walking meditation bit comes in, because your mind just detaches. It's the most amazing thing [laughs]

INT- So when you say about your mind detaching, is it fro – your mind detaches from your body, or your mind detaches from -

A- From just whatever you're doing, you just seem t o lose track of time, I don't know, you sorta go blank. It's the most amazing thing.

INT- I've heard that from a few people actually. One person he told me that when he does tc he seems to, he said that that he loses time

A- Yeah you lose time

INT- And another person told me that um, the term they used was that they 'lose the room'

A- Mhm

INT- does that fit for you?

A- Yes it does, yes, I understand exactly what they were saying. It's it's, as I say it's the most amazing experience, and it's very difficult to put into words, because it's for each person it's different obviously, but, yeah 'losing the room' is a good one to do too, cause you just sort of, you lose time, you lo – you're you're not aware of what's going on around you, and you're in your own space [laughs]

INT- When when you're doing this you said you experience this both with a group as well as by yourself

A- Yeah

INT- When does it happen more frequently would you say? Or is it-

A- It's about the same – it it doesn't – as I say it doesn't happen every time, it's just once in a while that it happens, at least for me, and it doesn't matter where I am, whether I am with a group or I'm alone it just happens, yeah

INT- So when you're doing your tc with a group, and you say your mind detaches, do you actually lose awareness of the people who are around you also doing tc?

A- Yes, yes, yes. You become aware of what you're doing and yet – how can I explain this – you're aware that you're doing tc, but everything else seems to move off into the background there's nothing there but – you're in a bubble. You're in a bubble, that's what it is. Does that explain it?

INT- I'm just trying to get at

A- It's almost as if you're in a bubble you don't – there's nothing else around you. It's a timelessness feeling, really great

INT- Neat

A- Yes, yes, it is.

INT- Do you hear other sounds around you? Like I notice that, like here you can hear some traffic -

A- Oh yeah, no the sounds - nothing

INT- that goes too

A- that goes too. Everything goes

INT- Ok

A- yeah

INT- alright. And so then, when you're finished the tc set what happens?

A- You're back. Nothing – you know, nothing spectacular, nothing, just, you're back that's it. And sometimes, sometimes you'll comeback before you finish the set, like it'll only be a momentary thing *within* the set, that'll occur, like for a certain number of moves or something and then you're back again and you just keep going.

INT- Does this happen at a particular point in time during the set for you? Like can you get into that right from the beginning?

A- No, no. It's not something that you bring on yourself it's something that happens as you're doing it. Like you follow me? Like, I can't say to myself 'ok this is what I'm going to do' It'll only happen – it only happens. It's not something you can make yourself do.

INT- Right.

A- I'd like to be able do [laughs] but, no. I've tried, and it doesn't – the more you try to do it the less it happens. So if you don't try to do it then it'll happen, ok?

INT- Ok. Um, How do you find that - are there some commonalities between that timelessness that you're talking about when you do tc, and when you've done some of the other relaxation-

A- yes

INT- and meditative things?

A- Yes. Yes. It's the same um, for the – not so much for the physical relaxation, but for the meditation, ok. That's the same, shutting out of the world, the same bubble feeling that I get when I meditate. And now, it's just that I happen to be moving when it happens at tc, when I'm sitting and meditating it doesn't move I'm just – that's that's what I'm setting out to do. But in tc it just happens that way and it is the same feeling, yes. The same bubble feeling around you – you're enclosed in a bubble.

INT- Ok. So for you that term of the sitting meditation and the walking meditation really does -

A- really does combine yes

INT- it fits

A- yeah it fits

INT- Oh, ok, sure. Um, so my next question is really just an extension of this because if you want to add anything else about what does it feel like when you do tc, when you're right there doing it? Maybe you can talk a little bit about the process from when you start to when you finish

A- Um, the feelings vary. It depends on my physical state when I'm starting. I'll give an example. Today, I woke up, I was really sore. My neck hurt, my shoulder hurt my back hurt my leg hurt my hip hurt. Ok, it hurt all down one side and that's the effect of the OA. And I thought ' I really don't wanna go to tc this morning, but I'm going to go' So I came here. And I thought 'I don't know if I can do the exercises but I'm going to try' So, I started doing the exercises you know the warm up exercises we do Dan Yus and Tor Yus – you know what they are? Ok, yep. And we do some upper body warm-ups, little exercises. So we did the upper body, we did the DanYus, we did the Tor Yus. And, as I was doing them, the more I did them, the less pain I had. And it wasn't just because I was moving, it was because I was removing myself from the sensation of pain, because I was concentrating on doing my exercises in the proper form. As soon as we stopped and we were discussing what our next um practise session was going to be, the pain came back. As soon as we started doing the set, I had to concentrate on where I was putting my feet where I was moving, and the pain disappeared again. And in the process of moving, I also loosened everything up, so that when we did finish, the pain was at a bearable level. So that, in order to do the set, I had to overcome the feelings of pain, and so I detached from them and this is what tc does for me, is it allows me to move and at the same time detach from the pain that I feel, from the OA. Does that, does that sort of answer your question?

INT- Yeah, yeah. No that sounds like it's um, it's very powerful-

A- It is,

INT- for you actually-

A- it is

INT- being able to do that

A- Yeah, it is very powerful

INT- Oh ok

A- And so I'm not going to give it up [both laugh] But yep, this this is what tc does for me, and in the process of concentrating on where I'm putting my arms and my legs and my body, I can also feel where the pain is coming from so that I can concentrate on that spot and try and get the circulation going there. Doesn't always work, but I can try [laughs]

INT- It sounds like you're almost doing a little bit of visualization there

A- a little bit yeah, yeah

INT- So, can you – because I have seen this class sort of, partly through already, but I've never seen it from beginning to end, so can you just um, just briefly kind of walk me through what the routine is for you here?

A- Ok well, this is a class made up mostly of seniors, um because everybody can get out during the day and so it's more comfortable for them to come during the day. So we come in, we usually sit around the table and we chatter for a little bit, and then we get up and we do um, upper body exercises for warm-ups and then we do what we call Dan Yus' and Tor yus which are the squat exercises, and snakes, which nobody likes but that's another story. And then, usually we, the instructor will take a s – we we work on sections of the set for the first 1/2 hour to 3/4 of an hour, and sort of improve our technique, and sort of correct any mistakes that you might be making in that particular section. And then we do a set a complete set of 108 moves, we stop for tea when that's finished. That usually takes us to 11, 5 after 11. and then we do a second set afterwards, and then that's it. So for 1 1/2 hour we've had a fair amount of exercise

INT- Right, yeah, quite a bit

A- Quite a bit.

INT- And then, so then for you personally, I'd like you to tell me a bit more about what goes on in your mind, what goes on in your body, as you -

A- as I move

INT- Move through that routine basically

A- Ok.

INT- We've already kind of touched on things about -

A- touched on some of it, yeah. Uh what goes through my mind depends on what kind of a mood I'm in, quite often. I'm usually trying to get – trying to focus on doing the set, correctly, cause there's the placement of feet and the placement of your body the placement of your arms and shoulders. And there's a whole lot of things to keep in mind while you're doing it. Even after all these years we, we still have to think. And then, as you go along through the set you're you're keeping track of where you are in the set, what the next move is going to be where you're going to go for the next move watch out for the people on either side of you [laughs] cause some of us have a longer step than others. And and when the timelessness bubble appears, nothing. Just, you just go through it and then that's it. And then you know, I don't know how else to explain it. Uh physically, again, it's a matter of watching where you're going. And, I can also feel, as I mentioned before, I can feel where my body is aching and where I need to put a little less stress on the body or a little more stress on the body, as as I'm working through it. But that comes with time [laughs]

INT- It sounds very interesting how you can actually have these moments of um, so much going on in your mind about about choreographing -

A- Yes!

INT- and how your body has to go, interspersed with these sort of little bubbles of timelessness

A- Yeah

INT- It's really neat

A- It is, it's really neat [laughs]

INT- So, tell me then, about, what kind of effects do you feel, that tc has had on you, I guess it's both in the - kind of the short term stuff, like at the end of each set or whatever, as well as over the long term for example um, things that have changed from before you ever did tc and now that that you believe have some relation to one another.

A- In the short term, at the end of a set, I usually feel relaxed, and tired because it is hard work [laughs] At the end of the second set I really feel tired sometimes I'm sweating there are several of us in the class who end up sweating, from doing this. My heartbeat has hit, no doubt, a very high level, but it drops very quickly too, so that it goes back to normal very quickly.

INT- have you ever measured it?

A- Yes I have. I've hit my target beat at a hundred – what is it it 144, doing tc, and within a half a minute after quitting it's back to normal. My normal heartbeat is around 68

INT- Ok so you took your peak one when you were doing it were you?

A- Yeah

INT- Oh ok, interesting

A- Yeah and it's – I find that I have a lot more stamina than I used to have, even though I was more physically active before, like, before I ever started this. At university let's face it, you're running from room to room to building to building you're carrying 25Lbs of books and so, I was very physically active during that 4 1/2 year period before I even started tc. And I didn't want to lose what I had gained from that activity. And so I found that with the tc, even though I'm not running as much as in you know from here to there, the tc has kept me physically, not active, but limber, flexible. It's kept – if I hadn't been doing tc – I'll do it the other way – If I hadn't been doing tc, I would probably be walking with a cane right now. Kay, because of the OA in my hip, and in my back. And so all my doctors have always said, 'stay with the tc, even if you're only doing it on your own, you're at least keeping flexible, you're keeping mobile'. So there's my heart and my physical body, keeping going, I have far better lung capacity even thought I'm a smoker [said in an undertone] you can delete that if you want [laughs] I try to quit, but – I have far better lung capacity than I had before, be cause you breathe – you learn to breathe with the movements that you're doing. And because you're keeping you're body upright it expands your chest, you expand your chest with the movements that you do – [tape paused while Phyllis enters] so where were we

INT- We were talking a bit about sort of short term and long term -

A- Yeah, long term, the physical I gave you, and short term, again it was physical. But I do find a relaxation from it, whether it's short term or long term, it does tend to relax m, mentally. And the other thing I've noticed is that it kept my memory, because I have to keep remembering 108 moves, it's one of those things that exercises your brain. It dos, it does, because you have to remember the 108 moves in a sequence. And most of us don't have to remember that much all at once. So as you get older, I find that it helps, with my memory. I hope it's not losing my memory, but you know, you understand what I'm trying to say, is that it does help.

INT- Did you um, initially when you were learning tc, did you find it quite difficult to learn those 108 moves?

A- Yes, exactly, and it even now, I mean we still, even those of us who've done it for years and years and years and years, we still goof up now and then. But, your body remembers the moves, and, when you reach a certain point, I guess maybe that's when the timelessness the bubble comes in, is - some days, your body remembers the moves your body does the moves and your mind can go elsewhere. So your body's remembering and your mind has nothing to do with what your body's doing your body does it and your mind goes someplace else. Which is why I don't think you can force yourself to do that, to get into that state, because your body has to be able to do it on its own, then your mind can go

INT- Right, interesting

A- It is! It's very interesting, I guess to analyze it, that's where I would put that, is that once you've mastered the moves, there are days when , you can do anything, you can do the moves without thinking about them, and that's when that timelessness bubble crops up. But your body continues to do the moves. Very intriguing

INT- Kind of on automatic almost-

A- Yes

INT- I think someone's told me that

A- Yep, almost, yeah. Really cool

INT- so physically, it has helped you with pain, particularly, or do you want to say something specific about particular health conditions that you have that it has helped?

A- Well it's it's – the physical part of it has helped me with the OA, the keeping, keeping my joints loose so that they don't seize up, and helping me get rid of the pain. With the diverticulosis, that was stress-induced, ok [INT and A check tape] that was stress induced and when some of the stress in my home life disappeared, plus the meditation aspect of the tc plus my meditation has lessened all the stress then the diverticulosis has sort of calmed down, I'll always have it, but as long as I can keep from getting too stressed out, then it doesn't bother me – then it doesn't turn into an irritable bowel, which is what happens

INT- It's really a combination -

A- It's a combination

INT- the situation improving as well as having some coping -

A- coping steps-

INT- which is what you're using -

A- coping strategies, yep. And this is part of it, tc is part of it

INT- Yep, alright. So, you've talked about physical benefits because in the mental aspect you talked about the relaxation and sort of the stress coping. Um, when we talk about coping with stress, um, sometimes we talk about reducing it, when it's already there. Do you ever feel there is any effect as far as being able to make – I don't know, some of the things you're doing, the meditation, the tc, helping you be more stress-resistant, if you want to call it that?

A- Yes, yes, they do make you more stress resistant, because you [pause]- how can I put this- because when you're doing something like tc or you're meditating, you're getting in touch with yourself, with your inner self, the person you are, and that person's usually very very strong. With added stress and you know outside things that happen to you, quite often that person gets lost in the shuffle. And so for myself I've found that this has, the tc and the meditation have allowed me to get in touch with myself and that self is very stress resistant. And so when I feel the situation's becoming very stressful, I can search within myself and find that, spark if you will, that is stress resistant, and the tc and the meditation have allowed me to do that, they have, they have pointed where the s- where that little spark is. And so when I'm in a stressful situation, I can sort of stop for a minute, take a deep breath, and say, 'this is not going to bother me as much as it would have' It may still bother me, but I can resist having it bother me quite so much. Ok?

INT- Mm [Flip tape]

A- The articulation is so difficult

INT- Right. Well, I think everybody has a different terminology, but sometimes we have similar experiences and that's really where I'm -

A- That's where you're going

INT- sorta trying to go with this you know

A- Yes

INT- what might be unique to you but what also might be shared by other people even if they use different words to express that

A- right, yeah, ok

INT- So you talked about getting in touch with your inner self and that spark

A- Yeah! [laughs]

INT- That was interesting. Someone else I spoke with had mentioned that that problems for them, seemed to feel a little less burdensome, when they do tc, what do you think about that?

A- Yeah. I'd agree with that one, because, as I say, when you're doing tc, I guess – and the meditation – you're concentrating on yourself, and what you're doing. And that's always to the good. And, if you're concentrating on yourself, you can, you can find those strengths that are in you. It may not happen during a set, you know, like a tc set, but quite often – I don't know if other people do but I know I do if I'm if I'm waiting, I throw in an example if I'm waiting in the doctor's office and I don't have a book to read and you know what magazines are like in a doctor's office – I will mentally go through a tc set, do the set in my head, and that again is a form of, I guess meditation, because it it allows me to relax, and it allows me to get in touch with myself, and it's quite intriguing to do that, when you're sitting and you have nothing else to do or you're waiting for something or someone. And it's it's, it helps me get in touch with myself. I don't get stressed out if I have to sit and wait now. Cause I can sit and you know, instead of thinking about how long it's taking for the doctor to get through with their other patients I can sit there and I can do a tc set, and that will lead on to other things, you know, what, what's been stressing me lately, 'ok that's not important this is important maybe I'd better think about this one' it's almost a form of meditation. But yet I'm aware of what's going on around me, it's just thought patterns that go through my head.

INT- Oh ok

A- But it starts off with 'I'm bored, I'll just do a mental tc set' I don't know if other people do it, some people may some people may not but you know, it's just something I've found as a a trigger to relax me when I'm in a semi-stressful situation. But I think that's gone off the topic -

INT- No no. I think that's very much on the topic. I think it's interesting how you have incorporated tc in different forms into your life, really

A- Yeah

INT- Because you practise alone, actual practise of tc, you do it with the group, and you also do it mentally

A- Mhm, Mhm, It's also good a t night when you're trying to get to sleep if you can't get to sleep [laughs]

INT- Do you do it when you're lying in bed?

A- Yeah I do it in my mind then too, yeah

INT- I've heard of someone told -

A- It's better than counting sheep! [laughs]

INT- Little more interesting [both laugh]

A- Little more interesting, exactly

INT- Do you ever get through the whole thing -

A- No

INT- before you fall asleep?

A- No no, get about half way through and I'm pfsst, out

INT- So what do you, when you practise sometimes, do you ever get so into it that you actually forget where you're at?

A- Oh yes, Oh yeah. Oh yeah that's happened a lot of times. You'll even see us in a group here, and some of us will suddenly stumble because we're suddenly- 'where am I' you know 'I've missed something, am I in the right spot' sort of thing. it does happen, you get into it and you forget where you are.

INT- Ok. So now, you talked about physical and some mental and in a way emotional I guess-

A- Yes

INT- benefits. Have there – have you had any sort of I guess what you might call, just in a general way, sort of spiritual uh benefits or things that you feel have happened for you? And I mean that in the most general sense not specifically to religion

A- Um [pause] yeah I think so. Tc's uh, you know we do it as an exercise it's not promoted as a religion or as any part of any religion so we'll get that out of the way. But I think as as people get older they start to look for some spirituality, whether it is in an organized religion or not. And I think tc because it puts you in touch with yourself, as a practise, leads you into what um, or leads you towards what it is you're looking for? Do you follow me? Do you understand? Like it it if as an older person I am looking for 'what does it all mean' sort of thing , you know that type of spirituality, tc is a gentle way of leading me into myself to find out what I believe. Does that clarify it?

INT- A little bit

A- A little bit – It's kind of hard to put put a finger on it – It's kind of hard to describe. Because everybody is searching, and tc is simply a physical exercise, but when you do a physical exercise that requires that you, pay attention to yourself and what your body is doing, it also makes you pay attention to what your mind is thinking. And that can lead you, in, further into a spiritual quest – at least it did for me. I'm not a member if any organized religion, and I probably never will be again. Because I've gone beyond that sort of – for myself – I've gone beyond the organized religion. Um what I'm going after, I have absolutely no idea but tc has led me into reading on, because I wanted to find out more about the Taoist arts, and because I had a – as a teenager I had some interest in Buddhism, so this has brought it back to some extent, not to the point where I have become a Buddhist, but it has led me into the search of other religions to see what they – but that is my own, my own personal view on it. Other people may not see it that way. But some people – for instance, for people who are searching I think it can lead them, into a further study – not necessarily of Buddhism or Taoism, but into their own spirituality. But the person has to be open to that and whether other people would do it I don't know.

INT- Well, you talked about getting in touch with your inner self and when you started to talk about that , that's started sounding, to me, a little bit like some sense of spirituality

A- Yeah, it is. It's difficult to articulate some of these things you know, they're rolling around in your head but, quite often they're hard to articulate.

INT- Well, I was just curious I like asking that question just to know whether or not people have – it gives me a bit of an idea about how people see tc because I think it can be seen on many levels

A- Yes

INT- just as a ph- purely as a physical exercise, or as something more than that

A- Well this is why I say it would depend on the person. If they're searching then this would lead them to search further, simply because you get in touch with yourself. But if you're not interested in that well it's not going to make any difference one way or the other it's strictly a physical exercise

INT- So you don't feel there's a conflict between -

A- No, I don't see that there is, no. And as I say here, tc is promoted as health, and exercise and has nothing to do with religion, it's only if you chose to look into it that you look into it. And that's why as I say, it depends on the person. If the person's searching, then this will lead them, to search in places where they might not have thought of searching, because they're looking in to themselves. Even exercise can be done on many levels, so it depends on how you do the the exercise

INT- right. So do you see this as one – as something that differentiates tc from other other form of exercise or do you see it as as something that 's common to all?

A- Well, it depends on the person because standing on a tread master going hell-bent fore leather, doesn't necessarily indicate to me anything other than you're working an awful lot of muscles and stuff like that. I don't know whether my mind would work the same way doing that as it does when I'm doing tc.

INT- Ok. Well think about some of the other activities that you do, for example walking the dog

A- Um. Walking the dog and -

INT- or some of your crafts. Do you get the same sensation?

A- As I do when I'm doing tc? Yes. Yeah

INT- Do you get the same sense of timelessness sometimes?

A- Sometimes I do yes, especially if I'm doing something intricate with a paintbrush, or uh, um doing some intricate cross stitch, it's, I tend to lose myself in what I'm doing, sort of block out the rest of the world . And so yes it does, one sort of falls into the other, or they mesh or whatever, whatever you want to call it [laughs]

INT- Ok. Sure. When you do some of those activities, do you also find that you can use those to manage your pains symptoms or your stress symptoms?

A- The stress yes, not the pain, no. Because if I'm sitting doing, if I'm painting or if I'm doing cross stitch or something like that, I tend to be tensed up, because, you know, you're trying to do x number of stitches, x number of cross stitches [laughs] in one spot or something like that, and you're paying attention – you can still lose yourself in it, but I tend to tense up a little bit more than if I'm say walking the dog. Walking the dog, if it's a physical thing it's ok, when I'm sitting and doing something that's intricate I may lose sense of time, but nevertheless it's not going to get rid of my pain, it's probably going to get worse, if anything else.

INT- Hunching over everything, right?

A- Hunching over, exactly.

INT- And have you found that any of those other activities you've been doing, has that led to some of the um, I guess emotional, mental, spiritual, changes for you that you have just talked about with tc?

A- Um, not to the same degree. Um, I think if you immerse yourself in anything, it can lead to some introspection or this sort of thought pattern, which you do with tc, but not to the same extent because you're also using your brain to focus on something which is not physical, whereas with the tc you're using your brain to focus on something that's physical within your body. When I'm painting or when I'm sewing, I'm focusing on something that's outside of my body, which is slightly different. And so, um, yeah, you can get the same mental construct, but you're focusing on something different, there's a different focus, it's not a focus on yourself it's a focus on something else external. I don't know if that explains it or not, but it gives you some idea.

INT- Yeah, I just wanted to see if you saw much of a difference between the two-

A- Yeah, there is a difference, yeah. I can still lose myself in something that I'm doing but there's – it's not the same as when I lose myself in tc.

INT- OK. Another term that was bantered around by somebody else actually, um when they talked about tc and some of the experiences they have had is that they felt that to them tc was like a way of moving beyond sort of the day to day life, sort of transcending it, day to day existence

A- mhm, mhm

INT- and what do you think about that? Is that something that fits for you or is that not quite right?

A- Only when I'm doing the set. Taking that same feeling, I couldn't have it all day long everyday, because it would just not work, for me anyway. But I can understand what they're talking about. Yeah, but it only happens to me when I'm doing the set

INT- So, but that you feel that that actually does -

A- Oh yeah, it takes me beyond beyond – well that's that timelessness bubble, that takes you beyond, off someplace else

INT- Ok, alright. Um, you mentioned that tc gives you, has given you you know, sort of like more stamina.

A- Mhm

INT- At what point do you notice that – is it in some things that you do day to day?

A- Yeah, the day to day, just running up and down stairs all the time, and walking the dog, you know, take her for a long walk everyday and, um, general housework cause we have a large house and it takes a lot of house – you know housekeeping to keep it clean, and uh, gardening and stuff like that so yeah, I have a lot more stamina, I have a lot more stay-with-it power.

INT- Ok, just to be able to carry on-

A- just to carry on day to day, yeah

INT- Ok, alright. And it sure sounded like your doctor, or doctors have been supportive

A- Yes, for some unknown reason I've hit it really well, all my doctors have been supportive

INT- That's great

A- Yeah, yeah, we just got a new doctor actually, because our old doctor's moved out of town, and I sorta, you know, you hesitate and 'I do tc" and she says 'oh great, I'm so glad to hear you're doing tc!" she says 'that's great for you, keep doing it'. And I thought 'great, she and I see eye to eye' [laughs]

INT- Oh ok, but you were a bit hesitant

A- I was hesitant because so many doctors sorta look at you and 'Oh?' and I've even had, you know, friends acquaintances when I mention I do tc say 'Oh, why do you do that?'[disdainful tone] and you try and explain, 'well that sounds silly, dumb'

INT- Oh

A- I've had a lot of people say that

INT- Is that right?

A- Yeah

INT- They'd just never seen it

A- Some of them have seen it and thought 'oh just a bunch of people waving their hands' and it doesn't look like it does anything for you sort of thing. Although a lot of people are getting a little more open to the idea. Including my neighbours who look over the fence at me when I'm doing it in the backyard and go 'Huh?' [laughs]

INT- Oh, so you practise outside as well

A- In the summertime yeah, not in the winter in the summertime yeah, I'll go outside and do it. The dog thinks it's absolutely hilarious, she just sits there and watches me and wags her tail, [laughs]

INT- Oh really?

A- Yeah, yeah

INT- What's the, do you notice a difference when you do it outdoors -

A- Oh yes

INT- compared to indoors?

A- Yes, it's much more pleasant doing it outdoors. You get the feel of the grass – mind you I do it barefoot

INT- Oh do you?

A- A lot of people wear shoes, I do it barefoot, so you feel the grass under your feet, you feel the sun and, all the rest of it, makes a difference

INT- Does it?

A- Yeah

INT- How so?

A- I guess maybe because I like being outside. I love being outside, summer or winter. I'm just an outdoors person, I don't like being in buildings

INT- So it you had the choice-

A- If I had the choice I'd live outdoors

INT- Does this group ever do it outside?

A- We use to. Um, there's a park just down over here, but now with all the exhaust from all the cars you know you're defeating the purpose. We used to go out to Coronation Park, down by Westmount, we used to meet down there, you know, plan a week in advance, um, to go do tc in the park, so yeah, we do do it outside, in the summer time

INT- Oh ok. Does um, I've I've never noticed um this group do it with music and I was just going ask about that

A- We used to. And then somebody said and I don't know who it was, that um not to do it with music because it detracts from you paying attention to what you're doing, you're listening to the music rather than paying attention to yourself. So what – we have done it – the first set we'll do it without music, and sometimes the second set we'll do it with music if we can find some good music to do it with. So sometimes we do but they decided that maybe we shouldn't be because you're supposed to be paying attention to yourself as opposed to the music and quite often the music will distract you from what you're doing. Although, not too long ago they had a demo up at the WEM, and we were doing it to the country and western music that was playing over by the fountain [laughs] and it was quite interesting

INT- That would be kind of a unique experience

A- It was unique because I found that I couldn't do the tc properly I kept wanting to go faster because the music was going fast. So yeah I could see where it would be distracting to some people

INT- Do you um do you ever find yourself doing tc to music when you're -

A- Yes I do it at home

INT- Oh do you?

A- Yeah. I have a a CD that's called 'Tai Chi' actually. And it's uh just oriental type music, and it fits in quite well with the set, so – I don't think it was made especially for this particular set but it is tc music and it does tend to fit in so I I've taped it and I put it in Walkman every now and then I'll do it with the music

INT- What's the difference for you when you do it with and without the music

A- Without the music I do a better job. With the music I tend to get lost in the music and then I really goof up on my set [laughs], Ok? Yeah. Sometimes I can do it with the set and not – do the set with the music and not have a problem, but sometimes, it just depends on my mood, it depends on what I feel like when I'm doing it

INT- Ok. Well it sounds like you enjoy the music though if you are -

A- Oh yeah

INT- using it for at home

A- Yeah yeah

INT- And so you're practising for about a quarter of an hour everyday, is that right?

A- Yeah. Give or take

INT- Ok. Is that how long it takes to do a set?

A- Um, yeah, if you do it at a steady rate it's about 15-20 mins to do a complete set, if you do it slowly enough that you're going to get some benefit from it, I mean you can do it really really fast and do it in 5 mins if you really swung through it but if you're going to do it properly it takes about 15-20mins, yeah

INT- so you just – you do it once over everyday basically

A- Yeah

INT- Alright. Now I usually ask people whether they have experienced any, kind of unexpected effects, things that have surprised them, about doing tc, over the time that you've been involved

A- I don't know, I don't know if there's been anything surprising or not. Actually yeah, come to think of it, a couple of – about a year and a half ago, when I was doing tc, and uh I was doing it here, and all of a sudden my hands and my feet, started tingling, it was like you couldn't believe, and I sorta stopped, and I could feel the power, the the energy, between my hands – I put my hands together [demonstrates palms of hands facing each other, 6inches apart] and just feel it, it was just unbelievable it hasn't happened very often since then, but yeah, you can feel when you move if you do it the right way and you're doing it the right way you can feel the energy moving, um, the chi? I guess. They talk about that. But yeah you can feel it in between your hands [laughs]

INT- so that just shocked you -

A- Just shocked me 'ooh, what have I done?' [laughs]

INT- So did – was that explained to you afterwards?

A- Yeah It was explained to me – I knew what it was when it happened, you know, I had read about it before in another book and you know, it was one of those things that 'oh yeah, sure!' [disbelieving tone] but then it happened to me and since then, I have been able to feel it so yeah it's there.

INT- Ok,

A- Not all the time, but it's there. And then the uh, the therapist that I go to, I was telling him about it one day. He laughed and he says 'oh well I can make you do that even better' and so yeah, 'if you rub your hands together and then go like this you can feel it' [demonstrates rubbing hands together then placing them 6 inches apart, palms facing one another]. [laughs]

INT- Um, so that's really the only unexpected thing you've ever experienced-

A- yeah the really unexpected – I think it was unexpected enough

INT- Sure

A- Yeah

INT- So tell me a bit more about um, you said you'd read about that somewhere and it sounds to me like you've done a little bit of other reading outside of just coming to the class

A- Mhm

INT- Like how have you learned more about tc? Do you go to the workshops?

A- No. I do a lot of reading, I do an awful lot of reading. Um, I'm an eclectic reader I'll read anything. And so I've been reading about Tibetan Buddhism, I've been reading about UFOs [laughs] that's what I mean, I run the gamut from anything – I'll read anything that looks interesting. So in amongst all the other readings, I've read about energy patterns and all of the rest of that stuff.

INT- Ok. You haven't gone specifically-

A- No

INT- out there to read about tc

A- No. It'd just if I go to the library and I see a book that looks interesting I'll read it

INT- Oh ok.

A- Ok, so I'll read anything

INT- Um, and what is it about, what would you say it is for you about tc that that keeps you going, cause you've been doing this, I mean, even on your own without having to go with a group and so on, what has kept it up for you?

A- It benefits me. It's to my benefit It keeps me limber it keeps me mentally alert, it um, yeah. It's just become a part of me now, I can't see not doing it. It's not a compulsion to do it, it's just that it's become part of me now and I'll just keep on doing it until the day I can't do it.

INT- Does it ever – now that you know the 108 moves, does it ever get repetitious -

A- No

INT- for you?

A- No, never, cause each time you do it it's different. Each time you do it you find something different, whether it's a different way you've put your foot, or a different way you've moved your body, each time it's different. It never becomes repetitive, although the movements are repetitive, you're learning all the time the nuances, I guess is the word I'm looking for, in each move, that make it different

INT- Hm. That keeps it interesting for you?

A- Keeps it interesting, yeah, yeah. You never learn tc completely, it's always different, it's always a change. And as your body responds to what you're doing, it becomes different, you know. You become more limber so the more limber you become, the more flexible you become, the more different the moves become. So in my case in my shoulder because I couldn't move my [right] shoulder for awhile, now I can move my shoulder now I know that when I put my arm down this way I'm going to pull this muscle here, and, that's changed for me, I can move my arm a different way now, and same with my hips, they are more flexible, and now that they're more flexible, I can move differently, and so therefore it doesn't become repetitive because I'm moving at a different level. And that's having to change everything along the line in my body. So no it doesn't become repetitive, ever, ever, ever! [laughs]

INT- You're quite adamant about that [both laugh]

A- No, never never never never [laughs] Yep.

INT- I really just had one one more thing to check with you and that was, for you to be able to sum up is, what is it that you like the best about doing tc

A- [pause] What do I like the best about doing tc?

INT- You can say more than one thing if there's more than one thing

A- Yeah, there's more than one thing I think it's just – there are 2 things: there's the physical aspect of doing tc, which I find, you know, is beneficial to me. The other one is coming here, and being amongst people who, are doing the same thing you're doing, it's the companionship, and the friendships, that evolve from coming to do tc. So there are 2 things here: there's the social, and there's the physical. And I will continue to do tc whether I do it in a group or not, but coming to the group here, makes it that much more, interesting. Cause I did do it on my own for a long time and, you know, you do it, but uhh, it's not the same. You do it with a group, especially with a group that you've been doing it with for 5 years, and you know them well, it becomes, you know, 'I'm glad to see you' and 'How are you doing' and it becomes a support group. Mhmn

INT- Yeah, cause that's something you hadn't touched on before

A- Yeah, yes it does become a support group and it becomes, almost, almost an extended family, for some people very much so. For me it's been more difficult for it to become an extended family, but I have an awful lot of friends here, who are very supportive. And so, given my family home situation, this has become an escape for me. So, there are 2 things going on.

INT- Well that 's important too though-

A- Yeah of course

INT- I think

A- Yeah, yeah.

INT- Ok. Is there um, is there anything else that you wanted to add that you, you think is important about your personal experience with tc, something you wanted to share that the questions that I've asked didn't didn't touch on?

A- I don't really think so, not at the moment that I can think of um, I do know that tc for me, barring the fact of the uh just the physical exercise, I mentioned the extended family, the friendships and that, that has been very important to me in this group here, in the last few years, because of my home situation. Some of the people know it, most of them don't, but those people that do know, have, they keep track of me, they know where I am, and I know that they care. It's not that I don't have family that cares, it's just that this is a different type of caring. So it's not a, it's not a an obligatory type of caring, that you get in your family, it's just, other people caring for you. And I do the same for them. So, and I think that's been important to me. Um, it's the social, it's not even social, I don't even know what you call it?

INT- Sounds like some emotional support-

A- Yeah I think emotional support

INT- Kinda a sense of community-

A- A community

INT- or something

A- Yeah, something like that. Yeah, it's a community feeling I guess. It's difficult to put a label on it because it shifts and changes and one week, somebody will be in need of support, and that person will get it and you give it. And the next week maybe you might be in need of it and they give it back to you it's it's it's very difficult to explain, and it's very difficult to find something like that, in a group of disparate people. I mean we're all very very different here.

INT- Right

A- Very much so and we're all of different backgrounds and different financial status, and everything else. But there is an awful lot of caring going on. So I think that's important too.

INT- well it sounds like you have made some really strong connections with people in the group

A- Oh yeah, yeah.

INT- Oh that's really nice

A- It is!

INT- Well you've been here for a number of years so it's good that you've got that, having evolved like this

A- Yeah, and it seems to work with just about everybody that's here you know. I'll talk to people and they'll say 'I haven't been back and I miss it – I miss it when I don't come' There's a gentleman in our class, who for various and sundry reasons can't come all the time and, he said the last time I saw him I said "I missed you" and he said "I missed coming here" he said "I miss coming here when I can't make it, I miss it" He says "I don't know why, but I miss it" So it is, it's not just me, but there are other people that feel the same way. I mean we come in and we laugh and we talk and we do our set and we go, but there's something there, there's some feeling of community. And it happens in all of the classes, because I've been to other classes as well as this one that I come to during the day. I've been to the evening classes too and it's the same thing

INT- Oh is that right?

A- Yeah, so it, it seems to just be the people that are attrac – it, not just the people – it seems to be that the people that are attracted to this form of tc seem to have that little extra something in it that makes them keep coming back

INT- and it's something that goes beyond the actual exercise itself-

A- Yes.

INT- Isn't it?

A- Yes it is. It's something, it's not tangible, you can't put your finger on it, but it's there. I don't know what it is, it's just there. You should come to some of our classes [laughs]

INT- Well when I've come to watch this class or to the South side one I you know, it just seemed like a very friendly atmosphere, just right off the bat

A- Yeah, it's friendly, it's accepting, and you know, it doesn't matter who you are, come on in, you're welcome. And it seems to, extend, not just this group but extends throughout the whole TTCS network, cause, you know, I've been here when they've had workshops I've worked in the kitchen chopping vegetables when they have workshops, and uh people would come in from all over Canada. And it's you know like, 'never met you before but welcome you come on in' So there is a large community network, that just seems to evolve. It's really neat, it is

INT- Any last comments or last thoughts?

A- I don't think so , not at the moment, if I think of anything I'll let you know

INT- Of course that's fine. Ok I'll just turn off the tape and thank you very much

A- Oh you're welcome I hope there's something in there that you can use.

Anne (Participant ID #9)

Interview Transcript #2

Date: Nov13, 2001
Time of interview: 13:00-14:00
Location: TTCS West End branch
Atmosphere: Comfortable, relaxed

INT- OK , so, um you've had a chance to take a quick look over this [interview summary] and you saw from all the little blanks and things that there's a couple of questions that I have. But maybe, how bout if we start at the beginning and go through some of the blanks and the question marks [pause] I think it really was here and actually you just talked to me a little bit about that, just being able to -

A- Um, post surgical relaxation techniques allowed me to get up and be mobile faster, and to – when I stood up I wasn't hunched over, I was standing straight up which is much better for your posture and much better for mobility, post-surgical. And since this was abdominal surgery, and people tend to, bend over from the waist and not stand up – the other thing was, because I could focus my attention on my lungs I could cough up the crud that's supposed to be coughed up post-surgically, and clear my lungs faster of the anaesthetic gases

INT- Ok

A- And the other thing was that the anaesthesiologist was um – the first time it happened, was quite concerned and she told me to warn any other anesthesiologists that because I'm so relaxed when I go into surgery, my blood pressure tends to drop very drastically, an so they have to watch for that. But that is the result of going into surgery in a relaxed state, as opposed to being all stressed out before going into surgery

INT- Interesting

A- Yeah. So now if I ever go in for surgery or anything like that I have to warn them that my blood pressure will drop drastically and I'm not going to die on the table just to watch out for it [laughs]

INT- Ok

A- Ok? Does that one answer that question?

INT- Yeah, ok. You had mentioned in here that you practise um, relaxation often for pain management, but the meditation is for spiritual benefits

A- that's right

INT- So I was wondering if you could tell me a bit about that

A- I'm not a member of a, any organized religion, but I do know that I have a spiritual need to go – to search for something, and I'm not sure what it is I'm searching for, and the meditation helps me to sort of focus my mind on what it is I'm looking for whether it's for – I don't know how to explain this very clearly – whether it's for a higher being, a supreme being, a god, whatever, ok, I'm still searching. And so, I find that the meditation allows me to simply examine my thoughts and see where they're going

INT- Ok

A- Ok so that's where the spirituality comes in on that

INT- Ok and that ties right in to something else you talked about -

A- right

INT- last time too

A- Mhm

INT- Ok. And then you had said that your first introductory course was 6 weeks, right

A- Yes, it was 6 weeks and it was in it was in one of the schools in the neighbourhood

INT- Ok. And was that while you were – were you already in University by that time?

A- Yeah, I was. So, but – I just took the 6 week course – it was my first year of university. And therefore, although I had a lot of studying, I still had a little extra time – it was before I got really involved in the stuff I ended up doing at university

INT- Oh ok. Right in the practicums

A- Right in the practicums and stuff like that yeah. So it was my first year of university so I'm just taking introductory courses like English and a few other simple courses like that. And so although there was a lot of reading, it wasn't a lot of running around and preparation. After that it became a little more hectic and I just didn't have time.

INT- Ok. So you had the time at that point and it sounds like there was some convenience in it being close to you-

A- Right, close to home yes

INT- Ok. Alright that's that one [peruses summary]. Now, this piece here -

A- Ok [pause] when I have a lot of pain, and today was a prim example – I woke up with pain from top to toe on one side only, and I could hardly move. So in getting out of bed I had to, sort of, be really really careful. By the time I got to tc I was starting to loosen up a little bit, just simply from driving over here. During the Tor Yus and Dan Yus which are the warm up exercises, I focused on those spots that were extremely painful, and, in my mind I was gently stretching the muscles that were tight, and as I did that they actually would loosen up and relax so that I could stretch them a little bit further

INT- Ok, So it is, it is a form of visualization

A- It's a form of visualization so that I can say well if my shoulder's really sore I will sort of, look in my mind – because I've got an anatomy background, I can pinpoint the muscle and stretch it in my mind and then also stretch it, as I'm stretching it in my mind [demonstrates abducting at shoulder]. And that sort of, overcomes the pain that's gonna come from stretching it, ok?

INT- Right. So you've got, you've got a couple things going because you were saying that, when you're doing your tc, be it the warm up or the actual set, you can detach your mind from the pain

A- Mhm

INT- but at the same time sometimes you focus in-

A- Sometimes, if it's really bad I'll focus in on it to get rid of it, so that I, I know that I'm stretching the muscle that's tight – I'll know that it's the muscle and I'm – mentally I'll say 'this is the muscle and this is what I have to do 'kay, 'this is the insertion point this is where it has to stretch' that sort of thing [laughs] ok? So that clears that up?

INT- Yeah that does. Cause I wasn't quite sure it almost sounded like there were, it was a bit of a contradiction cause one – on one hand you were detaching yourself from it -

A- it depends

INT- but on the other hand you're concentrating on it

A- id depends on whether I'm in pain or not if I'm not in pain then I'll just detach from it and you know, detach from my body and the whole bit yeah. And sometimes if it's not bad, I'll detach from it and then it'll go away. But if it's bad, then I have to focus on it so that I can relieve it a little bit before I can detach from it.

INT- Right

A- Make sense?

INT- Yeah no that makes sense now

A- It's a matter of degree

INT- Alright. And then you had said about this part we just wrote that in and that's fine [spirituality/Buddhism addition]

A- that's fine

INT- Well, how about I'll just kind of go through the questions and then if there's anything that flows from that

A- Sure

INT- um

A- You want to know about my native healer shaman who taught me relaxation and why, all right. She and her husband were in charge of the apt block – they were the janitors of the apt block where my mother and I lived. She was from a small town in the central part of Mexico and she moved to Mexico City, when she got married. She and her husband had this little, sort of, tiny, apt, if you will, in the apt block and they were the caretakers

INT- Right

A- Ok? She was what they call a 'curandera,' which is a healer. She wasn't really a sh- not so much a shaman, as a curandera [spells it] And some people call them witch doctors but they're not [laughs]. She's a healer, she was a healer. And the reason that she taught me the relaxation techniques and the healing techniques was because my mother physically abused me as a child

INT- Oh

A- Ok. So when I would get beat up, she would take care of me, ok. And so she taught me the techniques of of going inside and saying to my body 'this ' you know 'this hurts but we can make it not hurt, and we can make you heal your body faster'

INT- Ok

A- Ok, so that was why I was taught that very young

INT- And that's, that's part of why earlier on you had used that idea of visualizing yourself in 'a safe place'

A- In a safe place, that's right [smiles], that's where it came from, ok? Not a problem. I don't mind talking about it as long as, you know, it's not – so that answers questions 2 and 3. Any more you want to know about that?

INT- Um, well were you actually, were you actually exposed to other types of healing techniques just being in the culture that you were in?

A- Yes, yeah, um, I don't know if I really thought of them at the time as being healing techniques, but the rituals during the Day of the Dead, and the rituals during Christmas, and as I got older I saw how the native [phone rings], the native uh mythologies were wound up and tied in with the Roman Catholic religion, which I found just uh, you know, the Catholics have always said they have turned the native people to real good Catholics and yet when you study the culture you realize that the natives have brought their own culture into the religion and most of the time the Church doesn't realize all of that stuff. I found that very fascinating. I learned about the peyote and marijuana and the other drugs that were used for hallucinating, the other hallucinogens, but I never used them. It was not something that attracted me and I never, I knew they were used and I knew how they were used but I never used them myself. But yes, um being exposed to that culture you learn a lot of that stuff just by being there, you don't really it's not a learning situation so much as it's just the situation that you're in, I mean you watch and you, just take it all in and leave it at that

INT- Well I think especially being there as a young child

A- yes, yes

INT- you're just immersed in culture

A- yes you're immersed in it so it's nothing different, it's just part of what you live on a daily basis and you never really think about it

INT- Do you think that having grown up in such a culture has influenced or coloured how you see the world now?

A- Oh *definitely*, oh yeah. I can see the difference in the way I think, with anybody else of my own generation that grew up say, in Canada. Because um the experiences that I had and the life that I lived is totally different. It was a total different culture it was, it's very difficult to explain it to anybody, nobody can *really* understand it, unless they themselves have lived in a different culture. So it colors the way I think and it colours the way I behave sometimes too. Much to some people's disgust! [laughs]

INT- Oh no

A- Yes, because you see, growing up in Mexico, death was a part of life. And growing up in the North American culture, death is *not* a part of life, death is to be fought. Whereas I grew up, if somebody died they died! So be it. It wasn't a major thing. And so I got into an awful lot of trouble when I was in nursing, because when I – when I was caring for a terminally ill patient, who was my own age and she was dying of kidney failure, and she did eventually die, I didn't break down and get all teary and hysterical as some of the other nurse – young nursing students did when some of their patients died, and when the Dr. said to me 'are you not upset' I said 'well, I'm upset, but I'm more upset for her young husband and her parents, than I am for her' and I got into *supreme, trouble* over that, I was hauled up in front of the director of nursing as being an uncaring person. Because I cared more for the living, than I did for the dead. And that is what I was brought up as, in the culture in Mexico. Death is a part of life, you accept death, you don't fight it – you don't commit suicide, but it is a part of being a human being. That's it. But that's not accepted necessarily in – well it's getting a little better now, but in North American, culture this is not accepted

INT- Mhm

A- And see down there people died at home, and they were buried from home, and uh you got to see the, the dead person laid out, and it was all done in the house, and there weren't things like funeral parlours and that sort f thing – at least not with the people that I knew.

INT- Right

A- So. So there's a cultural difference right there

INT- O definitely

A- And so that one caused me problems, as you can tell [laughs]

INT- Were there other things that you think, I guess in your own philosophy that you think you draw from, from that other culture that has been positive and helped you through-

A- Well this has helped me through things, obviously. And uh I think it's a certain fatalism that one learns when one lives in a poverty-stricken country and the *need* for all of the things that surround us, the material things, I don't *have* that need for a lot of material things. This is not to say I don't *have* them, but I don't find the need for them because I never have *had* them and I never had the *need* for them before. And so, I'm quite content with an awful lot less than a hell of a lot of other people are. And it was a non-materialistic society that I lived in and I've dragged that with me, which I suppose is to my advantage because I don't get upset when I see somebody who has something more than, than I do [laughs], because this doesn't bother me, it's not something that's, you know, they can have all they want and fine, I'm glad for them but it's not necessarily what I want.

INT- Ok. Alright. [pause]

A- this one here

INT- I think you've kind of answered some of that but the other thing I was curious about visualization during tc was um you had talked to me about how, really how vividly you can imagine yourself in a certain place, be it by the lake or by the fireside. Do you ever - do pictures ever come through your mind when you're practise tc? Besides that idea of -

A- besides the idea of

INT- of picturing the muscles and so on

A- um, that one's a hard one. I supposed there are thoughts, stray thoughts that sort of go through, visualization, you visualize things sort of random, random things yeah.

INT- But you're not actually picturing yourself in a specific place

A- No, no no no, there's random thoughts that come to mind, but I've never yet – not yet – Now that you've brought it up maybe I will, who knows? [laughs] Who know what strange things happen ...

INT- This one, about – yes, because when you did tc, that was that first course right?

A- Yeah that was the 6 week one yes

INT- And then you did university

A- then I did university

INT- then you came back?

A- Then we moved to BC – yeah, I didn't give you the – I finished – I graduated from university in '88, we moved to BC in 1990. and then we moved back here in 1995

INT- Right. Ok, so, between 1990 and '95 essentially, 5 or 6 years

A- 5 or 6 years I did it on my own

INT- and it was based on that 6-week course

A- Yes. Plus I had the book. I had bought the tc book. I didn't buy the video because we didn't have a VHS at that point. But I had the book. And I had gone through the entire set – I had learned – I had been through it I hadn't learned it completely but I had been through it. So that I could get at least halfway through without having to stop and recheck where I was going

INT- Oh Ok. Cause you were – then at that point in time when you went to BC you were really quite new at it

A- Yes

INT- I would say

A- Yeah, yeah, uhhuh

INT- So, how did you keep up the, just the motivation – what was the incentive to keep practising

A- I don't know

INT- especially alone

A- I don't know it was just something that I thought ' well this is neat and I like doing it and I enjoy doing it' and, I guess maybe because it just sort of, was, something that I did, that's it, it was just part of me, that's all it is that's all I can say. And it's become even more so now

INT- Right ok

A- And I just wanted it to become part of me so

INT- No it sounds like you integrated it very early

A- Yeah

INT- Right from the start practically

A- Yeah

INT- Mm. Ok

A- On the days that I don't practise

INT- It's funny that you mentioned to me about not coming to class the other day

A- How are those days different?

INT- Not so much what's stop- well you can talk to me about what stops you

A- What stops me from coming usually is because I'm not feeling well and so therefore I just don't ant to take a chance on, sort of getting out of the house and having, no bathroom. Ok that's with the bowel problems. Do I notice a difference when tc is absent from my day? Yes. I don't, I don't I feel it there's just something missing. If I do my set then I'm ok and I go about my business fro the rest of the day. Sometimes I do it in the morning, sometimes I do it in the evening, it depends on what my day's been like. Sometimes I'll do it in the morning and the evening, had a bad day, ok so that answers another one of your questions down there

INT- Yes. And then, oh yes, this was the thing about physically relaxing, yeah Line 154; it says here that "the physical relaxation quite often comes in with the meditation. It's not the other way around, so that if I'm physically relaxing, trying to get rid of the pain, the meditation doesn't seem to click in but if I'm doing it the other way around then the physical relaxation comes along with the meditation'

A- Yeah, right

INT- It sounds like they're a little bit separate there, you keep them fairly separate when you practise one or the other

A- Yeah, that's right

INT- But then when you actually do tc, what's happening? Cause it sounds to me like you're getting both in

A- I'm getting both in yeah, cause I got to thinking about that one afterwards and when I'm doing tc, especially if I'm doing it along, cause if I'm doing it in a class it's not quite the same but if I'm doing it alone then I get into the relaxation and the meditation. I do get it in the class but not as often cause usually something will [snaps fingers] you know sort of, distract me. Ok cause in the class there's always somebody doing – like today we forgot where we were going and half of us went one way and the other half went the other way, ok, so this, this can happen. But if I'm practising alone, I get the relaxation and I get the meditation together, not all the time, but you know, enough that it's, it's kinda neat when it happens, ok, so does that clarify it for you?

INT- So for you it really is a combination

A- So yeah, it is a combination of both yeah

INT- Oh ok. [softly discuss what questions have been answered/ remain to be discussed]

A- Line 267 – here we go

INT- We talked about a way to become familiar with your body so that when there's something wrong with it you're more aware. So, would another term for that – does that make sense to you?

A- Yeah, sure, physically in tune with my body, sure great.

INT- The reason I asked you that was because after describing this you said you thought there was a word for it but you weren't sure what it was and I was wondering if it came to you afterwards

A- Um yeah proprio -

INT- proprioception

A- That's the one

INT- Like knowing -

A- Knowing where your body is in space. That's the one

INT- Ok, ok

A- Yeah, that's the one

INT- So for you, that's one of the things that tc has done for you is it?

A- It's it's it hasn't done it for me because I was always aware of it, it's just enhanced that feeling. Cause as a ballet dancer, you have to know where you're body is in space and that's something I've carried over from my ballet. But this has enhanced it somewhat more because obviously when I did ballet I was young, I quit doing it when I was 12, and so, this is just sort of, brought it back out, enhanced it, ok?

INT- Ok right. So you feel like your proprioception is enhanced and at the same time, you feel like you're more in tune with what's going on inside-

A- inside

INT- your body

A- right ok. Line 291-

INT- Line 291 Ok this is about the meditation – "when a person is doing the tc set, especially if you're doing it in a large group, and the group is together"

A- "working together" [INT and Anna continue reading the segment silently]

INT- Yeah. How does – tell me more about this – why 'especially in a large group' what's special about that?

A- It's very difficult to explain. It's – I've done tc when they've had a workshop here and there've been 50 or 60 people here all doing the same thing. And it's almost as if, there's an energy in the room that propels you, and it just keeps you going, and – when there's that many people obviously we can't do the same number of moves that we would do if we – if it was a smaller group. Like in some moves we have to do 7 repetitions in one direction, and there's no way you could do that without ending up, especially in the kitchen or something like that [motions to far end of the room]. So somebody will suddenly, you know, say '3 wave hands'. So everybody will s – everybody would just stop and then just turn as a group and they'd go into the next move, and it is the wildest sensation, that you are a part of this group and this group is generating an energy, which you can feel, you know and it's just, it's just all in the entire room.

INT- Ok. Alright. So is it something that's around you, or between you and other people or what

A- It's just it's just everybody it's just around you the entire room feels like it's filled with that energy.

INT- Ok

A- It's an amazing thing – that's in an especially large group

INT- Ok, and when everyone's doing everything together

A- together. Exactly, yeah, yeah

INT- Cause you had talked about some of the distractions when you do it in a small group sometimes

A- When you do it in a small group there's – how can I explain this – when we have the really really large groups doing it, there are more instructors and more advanced students within the group, and they sort of spread themselves around so that everybody has somebody who's more advanced, to follow so therefore there aren't as many distractions. When you have a smaller group, for example our morning group, there's only about 4 or 5 of us who have done it long enough that we can do it without having to think and everybody else is at a sort of semi-beginner level – they've finished the Beginners' but they haven't been doing it very long and therefore they're a little more, hesitant, they don't know the entire set so they will be the one's that distract us, and we have to say ' we're doing this' you know so therefore we take care of them make sure they get through the set ok. So this is the difference between a great big group or a smaller group.

INT- Ok. Its that doing it in unison it sounds like

A- Mhm, mhm, yeah

INT- Ok. Yeah, I've heard that from someone else too they talked about sort of this energy

A- the energy flowing it's just amazing you feel 'whoa! Great! [laughs]

INT- Ok. Alright, 480 – oh yes, you talked about tc being good for your memory because you had to learn all these 108 moves

A- had to learn all these steps

INT- and keep them in you r mind

A- keep them in your mind, and it has helped just because I guess it's another exercise for your brain, and the more you exercise the brain, the more, it works

INT- right. Have you noticed, I guess have you noticed now that you're more familiar with the moves, have you noticed any carry-over into daily life for you?

A- Well I can remember a whole lot more than I used to!

INT- Is that right?

A- Yeah, it you know, in sort of in sequence, as long I have to remember something in sequence. I guess maybe it's just because I have to remember the set in sequence so therefore I've tuned a portion of my brain to accept anything that has to be done in sequence, which is kinda neat

INT- Any particular examples?

A- Well, when I'm working on the computer, there are certain things that you have to do in sequence. And I can do the m without thinking – my husband on the other hand, can't, and he's always calling me ' where do I go now?' and I can run it through my brain and remember these things, whereas, you know it's not something that normally I would remember because I don't work on the computer as a regular thing. It's not something that I do everyday. But I can remember these sequences so obviously somewhere along the line I've remembered something, or it's it's connected something in there? Yeah

INT- Mm, ok. Alright

A- extension course

INT- Um the reason I asked you about 'extension' and 'external' courses was just because someone else who I had spoken to from the Taoist TCS had mentioned that they had taken an external course and so I wasn't quite sure if these were two different things

A- At that time it was called an extension but now they call it an external

INT- Oh, they're one and the same

A- one and the same thing

INT- Alright that's fine

A- Why did I do it? Because I wanted to [laughs]

INT- How did you hear about it? I never did ask you about that

A- It was in one of those um, continuing education flyers that comes from Public Schools or something like that, one of those things yeah

INT- Ok. Alright. And then you mentioned to me that there was something particularly nice about being outdoors, just as a general rule for you

A- Yeah, and doing tc outdoors is just an extension of that because I like being outside, I just like being outside. So yeah, just something to do outside. Besides, it drives my neighbours nuts when I do tc outside [laughs]

INT- Well you're promoting it [laughs]

A- I know. We have a Chinese family that lives right behind us, and when I first started doing it it was really quite funny because Papa san, the elder, I could see him looking through the curtains at me [demonstrates peeking between mini blinds] and I never – I pretended I didn't see him you see, and he would watch me and he would watch me and then the days when I wasn't out there he would, look out to see if I was there, cause the houses are fairly close there at the back, so when I'm out there I occasionally see him watching me. They have a room upstairs which is sort of a sitting room and he' quite often sits up there, he watches me. He's an elderly gentleman, I think he's had a stroke, because he doesn't talk much and he walks with a limp so, I suspect he's just watching me and that's fine if he wants to watch me that's fine

INT- You're providing him some stimulation

A- Yes [laughs] I think so, yes, yeah, yeah

INT- Ok. Do you um, do you ever notice any particular other types of sensations or experiences for you that you find you just don't experience when you're indoors when you're doing tc indoors

A- I think I'm more relaxed outdoors. Indoors there's always you know, the dog is there, and the phone rings, or, my husband comes in and interrupts me in the middle of my set or something. When I'm outdoors nobody interrupts me. So I think that's mainly it, it's just that it's a little more peaceful outside for me.

INT- Right. And then you said – was - now was it in BC that you were doing this on the beach?

A- Yes. We lived not – we lived in Whiterock. About 6 blocks from the ocean, from the beach. And I would take the dog down for her walk and she'd go chase seagulls and I'd do a little bit of tc on the sand at low tide. Cause at low tide in Whiterock, the beach goes out for about a mile and a half. So you can go way out, nobody's gonna see you or if they see you they know what you're doing, especially in BC where everybody does strange things on the beach! However, yeah, I used to do it on the beach down there. Leave a little pattern of footprints, puzzle somebody else that comes along [laughs]

INT- That sounds really nice

A- It was, it was really nice, I loved it there.

INT- Ok. Well that was all my questions and – but you had mentioned for you that one thing you hadn't told me about last time

A- was the migraine headaches. Because I haven't had one in 2 years, and I'm not talking just a run o- I get the migraine headaches where I end up in the hospital, do the Demerol and Gravol and, it's so bad that somebody has to scoop me up and drive me to the hospital to get a pain killer. I haven't had one of those in 2 years. And prior to that they were, they were starting to get less and less, and I found that as soon as I started with the tc, the less stress in my life – the less stress that I was feeling, the migraines started to get less and less and less and as I say, I haven't had one of those bad ones for a year and a half now, almost 2 years.

INT- That must be a relief

A- It is. A distinct relief cause I was, I was having them quite often like, 2 or 3 a month where I'd end up at the hospital and of course every time you go in, it's not so bad now, um, but every time you go in of course they check you for drug usage and they check your arms for drug tracks and your legs and you go through the whole neurological thing where they flash the lights in you eyes which is the last thing you want when you have a migraine headache. So now it's not so bad because they know me at the MHE and I'm on their migraine list so that when I have one I go in the Dr. checks the list and 'yes ok you've got it' and they give me my shot and I go home! So but as I said – knock on wood- I haven't had one for almost 2 years.

INT- And you've really lived with that for most of your life

A- I've lived with that since I was 13. Prior to that I had what – something they call abdominal migraine – as a child. Um it, it's n upset stomach where you throw up for 24 hours and then you're fine. We never knew what it was but I found out later, about 10 15 years ago, that this is what they call abdominal migraine in a child. And so obviously I've had it for, probably all my life, but I didn't start getting the real bad headaches until I was 13, 14 years old. And I've lived with them ever since. And I've been through all the neurological tests and everything else and they just say 'oh yes you've got migraines' and 'we'll try this on you' or 'we'll try that' or 'we'll try this' so, yeah

INT- Right. Did you ever um did you ever go for other types of sort of complementary therapies like acupuncture or herbal or anything like that?

A- No. I tried the herbals, I tried feverfew for the migraines, and um, I dunno, it sorta worked but it didn't sort of thing. It was one of those things that -

INT- Nothing noticeable-

A- nothing noticeable so I really didn't pay much attention to it. And then when the uh, they came out with the standardized feverfew which is I think– I've forgotten what they call it now anyway they put it out one of the drug companies put it out. I tried it for a while and didn't seem to make any difference one way or the other so I thought why waste my money. I got, I got freebies from the dr. to try and then when I ran out and thought 'nah, I wouldn't waste my money on it' Cause it really wasn't doing anything for me.

INT- Ok, yeah. You had mentioned to me that you actually had um – you were doing some nursing

A- Yes I did 2 years of nursing – Montreal yeah

INT- so, did you have actually a diploma in nursing

A- No, that's a that was a 3 year nursing course and I didn't complete it I only did 2 years of it

INT- Oh ok. But in the course of doing that there was actual like practical -

A- Oh yeah, this is, this was before they did the nursing in the university. This is when you went into the hospital and started there and you studied for 9 months and then went on the floors and you did your thing. You sold your soul to the hospital for 3 years. Right. And I did it for 2 and couldn't stand it. Simply because I was still suffering culture shock. Because I came directly from Mexico into a dormitory with 360 girls that I didn't have a clue how to relate to, ok? So we left Mexico in June and I entered the hospital as a nursing student, in September. That gave me -

INT- Wow, you're like a foreigner

A- Exactly! Exactly, yeah. And of course nobody could understand because I mean I spoke perfect English and I looked like a Canadian, but you know 'how come you don't understand? Why don't you know about you know, curling your hair on pop cans?" and this sort of thing something just alien to me. You know, so it was total culture shock, so I I hacked it for 2 years and then said 'no, I can't do this, I just can't do it' so.

INT- That was quite a change

A- Yeah, yeah

INT- Do you ever think about going back

A- I thought about it, yeah [smiles]

INT- It's not for you

A- no, no [laughs] too old, too old.

INT- Ok, well I don't know if after we had our first interview whether there was anything else that struck you that you wanted to add

A- Not that I can think of, other than the migraines that was the only thing that came up

INT- Ok. Was there anything as you read through this that you felt needed deletion?

A- No

INT- Ok

A- As far as I can tell it's all there, no problem

INT- Well thank you

A- Thank you.

RA (Participant ID #10)

Interview Transcript #1

Date: Nov. 19, 2001
Time of interview: 11:00-12:30
Location: TTCS-West End, second floor practise area
Atmosphere: Comfortable, relaxed

INT- OK so I've had a chance to look over the bkgd info sheet that you had sent back to me and I just wanted to clarify one or 2 things with you. You rated your overall health as good – do you have any current medical conditions?

RA- [edited for brevity] Uh yeah. RA, gout, HTN, and I have rosacea. But I'm under medical care and I take Rxs for all those. So with the Rxs, blood pressure and these other things are good

INT- Right Ok. You mentioned under occupation that you're retired but I was just curious about what kind of work you did before you retired

RA- Oh I was a machinist. And I did that for a long time and you stand beside one machine and you may move a little bit but you don't really use all your leg muscles. So I had a lot of problems from that.

INT- Oh ok, like what kind of -

RA- Well, I had trouble previous with uh my right knee, and uh it kept swelling and there was a growth on the cartilage so they took that out. And then, as you working and standing there, you had a tendency to favour that knee, so then you used the other knee of course, or the other leg, and uh eventually both knees were- I had both knees total replacements

INT- Oh ok, alright. Have you had um have you had any other uh major surgeries like uh on any of your joints or anything?

RA- No, not on my joints no

INT- Oh ok, alright. Um, were you working here, in Edmonton?

RA- Oh yes. Yeah we moved here in '64, and moved into the house where we still live

INT- Oh ok, so you're well, you're well settled here. Where did you move from, in '64?

RA- Moved from uh Red Deer and, I'd worked with a company there for – I worked in RD for 7 years and previous to that, we lived in Calgary, both myself and my wife

INT- Right. Oh ok. And then you mentioned that you finished HS and then for your job were you required to do any other training or uh that sort of thing, past HS?

RA- Well, it's on the uh, on-the-job training. Like you'd think that being a machinist that you would go to NAIT and work in apprenticeship, but the type of machining with automotive stuff and uh they don't teach that at NAIT. So the only place you can get it is actually in the shop. But you don't get a certificate or any of that, so it's really not a recognized trade through the unions.

INT- Oh ok. [pause] alright, now you had mentioned that you do some yoga

RA- Oh I did one time, yes

INT- Oh ok when did you do that?

RA- Oh that was uh it's a long time ago. I can't get a date on it but – that's when I found out that I was really getting stiff, from the hips, in the knees from , you know from standing so much. And I couldn't do yoga very well – I did it for one year

INT- Oh ok, alright. So this was back when you were still working even

RA- Oh yeah, it'd be way before that

INT- oh ok alright

RA- Yeah it'd be approximately [pause] I would have to think

INT- Oh ok [both laugh] like more than 10 years ago wolf you think?

RA- Oh yeah, yeah it'd be more uh at least 15 maybe 20

INT- Ok alright

RA- But it wasn't – I tried it and it wasn't my kind of thing

INT- Oh ok. Um you mentioned that you do Lok Hup, right?

RA- Yep

INT- And that's every Saturday

RA- Well like there's some Saturday's I can't make it but I try to – Saturday's always' kinda busy and you know, so – Right now, we have that branch council meeting and I'm stuck on that so – that takes a Saturday out

INT- But otherwise you go and it's for 2 hours is it

RA- Yeah there's a little break in there but it's a 2-hour day

INT- ok so um do you see Lok Hup as something that's uh I guess related to tc?

RA- Yeah. In the LH sessions we do the same basic exercise – warm-up exercises, we do all those the same way. Then we usually do a tc set, and then they start the LH set. And uh LH is just over 60 moves, and they teach it in halves. It's pretty hard to get the second half, so I only do the first half, which is 31 or 32 moves. But they're uh, some of the moves, the snakes and that in it, are a lot harder to do than they are in tc. And the LH as a rule, works more on the hip area than the legs sort of. But I find that, having done some of the LH, it helps the tc, it loosens up the, you know when we get those hips loosened then we can you know, do different things better, more comfortable sort of. Yeah I find it's really related to the tc. There's other ones, other, you maybe know these, the sword and the sabre set?

INT- Oh yeah

RA- Well they do them here too but I never started on that because I'm having enough, I'm having a lot of trouble with the LH one.

INT- Um, what kind of trouble, what how is it difficult for you?

RA- Well I think it's uh, an age thing, I'm probably the second oldest guy in there. And as you get older of course you're you know you're fighting all of these things that are going wrong with you

INT- Ok, so physically it's more difficult for you is that what you're saying?

RA- Yeah, I'm not as as flexible as I'd like to be, and uh, with the knee replacement, I can only get 90 degrees on them, which is normal you know, but that's not too much of a problem in tc, but in the, in LH you're really pushin' that all the time, pushin' that limit. And some of the – like I say the snakes are very tough

INT- Ok, that's where you have to bend really low down to the ground, is that right?

RA- Yeah. Only in tc, you're facing this way and you come up facing that way, and some of the ones in the LH you actually make 180 degree turn while you're coming up. That's the hardest one that would give you an idea about the difference. They want you to – you have to be able to do some tc before they'll put you in the – or le you try LH and I can see why [laughs]

INT- Ok. Now you said that you've been practising for 11 years now, right?

RA- Yeah, I started in '89 in April. But uh in '95, I had the operations on my knees, so I missed most of that year because they only do them one at a time. So I had one in March and one in September so. And in between it was really awkward. It was harder walking then than it was with both bad knees. I had to use a can in between. After the second one, I came back and it was, because more of a rehab almost – different type but similar. Because in the rehab they do deep knee bends and that's similar to Dan Yus

INT- Oh I see, so you're saying that some of the tc was almost like a rehab

RA- Yeah, it's an extension of rehab. And one thing that the tc does is it builds muscles in your knees, around your knee joint, and I find that's really good on these artificial knees.

INT- Mm, ok. So that's why at some point I think you said you've been doing this for 10 years, and so it's because one year out of the 11 years that you've been a member, you were having your surgery

RA- Yeah. Pretty well

INT- Ok. So have you always been with the West End club?

RA- Yeah. I've been to visit the South Side a couple of times and we went to Calgary on workshops. And uh but basically it's been here all the time

INT- Right. Ok. Um, well maybe what we'll do is get into a little bit of maybe you could tell me a bit about how you actually got started in tc?

RA- Uh yeah. I was having a lot of trouble with my knees there, I was still working but and my wife was nursing over at Canterbury Court, and some people came over there and did a demo. And she said 'well you should maybe try that or look into it anyway'. So I came down here and watched them do a set and decided 'yeah, that'd be worth giving it a try'. And I, that's how I got started. It took me a long time to learn the set because I, I was in a lot of pain, with my knees all the time, and it's hard to concentrate when you're in pain, you know. There's no pain now at all, that's the good thing

INT- Right. Do you think that's from that's because you had the knees replaced?

RA- Yeah. So that's the other thing that I was talking to – or, I was thinking about when we- I first talked to you, that I don't know whether this tc has improved my health that much in that regard, or it's – I think probably it's more likely that the operations did. But the tc, helps. And the same thing with the RA, I was doin' all this tc and I've been doing it well, last year it was really bad, I was getting – my shoulders and my hips were really getting sore, and uh, at that point they put me on a different drug, a new drug, that had just came out. And that's – I think that made the big difference, rather than the tc, although, some days when I'm all stiff and – well not really bad but I really don't feel – you know I feel a little stiff or a little bit of pain in the shoulders come and do a set, or come to the class, and by the end of the class I feel a lot better.

INT- Hm, ok

RA- with the movements

INT- Hm, tell me more about, about that. What do you mean by 'I feel a lot better'?

RA- Well there's uh, if you can get away from pain, you're going to feel better. That's what I was referring to is the physical part of it

INT- So it actually, you feel less painful after?

RA- Yeah it uh, it eases right up, sometimes it goes entirely away by the time I'm through the class

INT- [pause] Alright. So you got started in tc because you, your wife thought that it would be good for you to take a look at this, right, and so you came to watch a demonstration here. Uh, can you think back and remember what it is about it that made you say 'yeah, I think I'll, I'll try that'? When you saw it or -

RA- Well, it was actually an ongoing class that I had watched. And there was a lot of people, it was a big class at that time. And I saw all these people moving together, uh in un- you know, really close unison, and I could watch the movements and I thought 'well, yeah, I could probably do that' because it's not like uh, uh, some of the other martial arts that are vicious and fast and, lot of body contact. And I thought 'well, yeah it would be worth a try' if it didn't work out well, you haven't lost anything but you've tried something. And if you know you've tried and you feel it's not right well then you could say 'well yeah but I tried'.

INT- Okay, similar to the yoga that way where you -

RA- yeah, yeah, exactly

INT- Are there any other first impressions that you had when you saw, saw the group doing their, their class

RA- Yeah, I asked one or 2 of the students how long they had been doing it, and practising tc ,and they said, one of them said ‘a year’! And I couldn’t imagine someone learning all that in a year

INT- Oh ok, like that whole, the number of moves

RA- Yeah, the whole set in a year, you know, that that astounded me. And of course when I started to learn it, it took me about 3 years [laughs] but uh -

INT- Right. It’s a long set

RA- Yeah. But it’s uh, now it comes uh, uh kinda like sometimes you’re doing a set and you kinda like come out of a daze and you don’t know how far along in the set you are, you’ve been doing it without thinking at all

INT- okay, right, hm. [pause] What do you like about tc? Can you tell me a bit about that, like when you first saw it, what was it that you liked about it?

RA- [pause] Oh, I liked the way the moves were controlled, and uh after I’d been taking it for about a year, my wife started to take it with me. She of course had to take the beginner class and then come into the same class. She still comes to all the classes now. So that’s kinda good and then uh, uh now that we’re retired, we have a lot of time on our hands, and this is one thing that gives the week some kind of focus, you know, like, if I didn’t come here, 2 uh, mornings a week, I’d probably sleep odd hours and this kind gives the week some kinda unity – or, kinda not standardizes it but, you know, makes it uh -

INT- sounds like it gives you a bit of structure or something

RA- Yeah, that’s the word, structure yeah, it gives your whole life some structure. And of course, my wife likes it because the classes that we attend are, are a lot of women in there, and she likes, you know, when we take that tea break, then she talks to all the women, so. And having her do something with you that she really enjoys is a real plus.

INT- Right. No it’s nice to be able to do something together I guess

RA- Yeah. She doesn’t touch the LH but I can understand that, but yeah, she really likes coming to – gets upset if we can’t make it

INT- Kay. Um, [pause] you mentioned that sometimes you – well maybe we’ll start at this question – if um, now that you’ve been practising for many years, you’ve probably run into maybe some people who’ve asked you about what tc is about, have you?

RA- yeah

INT- How do you describe tc to to someone who actually hasn’t even seen it? How would you describe it to them

RA- [pause] Well, to begin with it’s based on a martial art, rather than being a martial art. And, that - because most of the people I talk to of course are above my age, and if you asked them – if you didn’t say that they would think it was, you know , a real hard fast exercise. So I explained to the that it’s just based on martial are and that it’s slow, an it’s easy, and uh, it takes a long time to learn, but it gives you some achievement. And, it would probably help, you know, depending on what problem the person has. Like some people I know have circulation problems. And I say well it would help that. You know if they’re having back problems, this is really good for their back. So that’s – but I don’t really push it but I, of they really want to know about it, I can tell them as much as they want to hear

INT- Right

RA- Cause I find if you say ‘oh you should be taking’ you know, they won’t show up, you know. Not too many people are really that interested. I suppose it’s, uh, it’s the stage of their life, like,, because after you retire, no matter what you do, you’re gonna settle into it and that's be kind of a way of life. So you don't really want to do anything, you don't want to disrupt that routine. Like if you're doin' woodwork or something and you're happy doing that then, but then don't complain to me if you get sore shoulders or you know, or if you can't sleep at night.

INT- Hm. You didn't find it hard to start something new, did you? Like when this came along?

RA- Uh, it was, yeah. Because when I was working like, I was uh, in the machine shop I was grinding crankshafts which is, you pretty well have to be left alone, cause it's a full concentration job. And so, that was the kind of person I was anyway, you know, kind of a loner and not a social type person. When you come to this then you have to change. And that change from being a loner like that, where the only time I would talk to anybody would be at coffee breaks or lunchtime, to the kind of thing now, that I found that uh – and even my wife says, 'you're more relaxed when you're around other people now than you ever were before'. And it's just because of the association and, uh, I guess you could call it friendship

INT- Right. Have you made a lot of friends here?

RA- Well, not real close friends, but, associates that you can talk to

INT- Oh ok, right

RA- Like, at the club, or if they have a, a social event then we have to go to that my wife says so [laughs]. I can talk to these people kind of openly and freely. I think this'd be – if I hadn't done tc, this interview would be a lot tougher than it is. But it, I feel relaxed It's a I think it's a benefit I don't know

INT- And you mentioned to me earlier, you said you were actually a board member now, is that right?

RA- Well they have a seniors club they call golden division. And for some reason or other I got sucked into being the president of that. They couldn't get anybody else so I got stuck with it, so, being the president of the golden division, automatically puts you on the branch council. You have the full voting privileges of a member in branch council but you don't get elected on there in the normal way. I'm not just too sure what the hell the normal way works, but I know I got stuck on that one too. That's one of the reasons I miss some Saturdays, cause they usually have the meetings at 9:00 in the morning and they run right through till noon.

INT- Ok. So you've gone from being pretty much a loner, to, being quite involved actually in the TTCS

RA- Yeah, along those lines, I took that instructor training course uh, 2 or 3 years ago. And that was pretty good and I tried being an assistant. And that worked not too bad. But uh, I just don't have the stuff to make a, an instructor. But uh, being an assistant when they have a big class or something is, is quite alright.

INT- Oh ok. So you do help with the teaching sometimes now

RA- Yeah. Last year, was really busy. I did one class, helped with one class here in the afternoon Tuesdays and Thursdays. That lasted about 3 months. And then I was doin' an external class over at the ESSO which is Edmonton Self Starters. And that was every Wednesday morning. And that was, I couldn't take that [laughs] But I did it for a whole year. This year, well since the holidays I haven't done anything but I'll, I'll probably get asked to do some in the New Year, some assisting. They say it helps if there's just somebody there, like on the other end that, that knows the set so, that people when they're looking one way they can watch you and when they're looking the other way they can watch the instructor, instead of trying to look over their shoulder.

INT- Oh ok right

RA- so it's just a simple thing

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INT- Oh ok right

RA- so it's just a simple thing

INT- So as an assistant you're essentially just practising along with the group and providing someone for them to watch

RA- Yeah, and, you can occasionally if you see somebody that's not – way off line, either bring it to the instructor's attention or, if it's a small thing just mention it to the person.

INT- Oh ok, alright. Um, kay maybe we'll, if you can maybe we can talk a little bit about what is it that um you feel keeps you – well you've been practising for 11 years, so how come you've stayed with it? What is it about it?

RA- Well, outside of getting things, getting my body more flexible, and then, becoming aware of how it works on the internal organs, which you know, they don't tell you when you start, and I thought 'well yeah, that might help' you know because I have some other things I don that aren't too good [laughs] and this might help a bit so, and I feel really good when I do it, you know, like I don't know how other people that are 70 feel, but I feel really good, 'cept, some things I can't do but, actually, you know, general overall feeling at all times is really good.

INT- Ok. Can you tell me a bit about um, what it feels like for you when you practise like when you're doing the set, can you walk me through a bit, how that happens for you? What do you do from the start of the set to the end of the set? How does it feel, what do you think about, and so on?

RA- [pause] Well a lot depends on on how stiff I am, or if I'm really loose. And then I can always tell, what kind of a set it's gonna be, for me, when I do the first bow. I can tell how loose my back is, and how loose my hips are, very early – right, right then. And if I get a good feeling there, then I try to uh, become more relaxed during the set, and, of course I always try to remember all the things that they keep telling you and it's very difficult. And there's always one or 2 moves that I'm not satisfied with, myself, like the way I do them so, if there's someone there more experienced than I am – uh I don't mean by years but I, their ability – then when we get to those 2 moves I try to be in a position where I can watch them, do these. There's always 2 or 3 moves like that, that I'm working on myself. Some of them I've been working on for a long time. And uh they are getting better, but I don't know why, I guess once you reach a stumble in a move it seems to hang on forever you know. But on a real god day, like I mentioned before I could be partway through the set and not even realize that I've done it. The days that you don't get that feeling and you're kinda concentrating, I still try to get that extra feeling that some of the senior instructors talk about

INT- What's that?

RA- Well there's some stretches that uh, that I don't feel. And uh they say it's because I haven't developed that far yet. So I'm looking for these,

INT- can you give me an example of that?

RA- Yeah, the one we were doing a week ago, it was just in the warm up there, the Tor Yus. Uh, I the instructor was talking about uh, that when you do the Tor Yus when you go back you continue to go back, not down. He said if you can do that, you'll get a different feeling a different stretch. So, I had been doing it pretty well that way, and then when I mentioned to him 'yeah I can get that stretch in the front leg, I can feel that all the way from, not from my foot like he said, but from the from the calf, right up to the hip joint, but I can't feel a stretch from my hip up to my chest muscles on that side, I can't feel that stretch. And her said 'you're just not ready for it'. So, when I come o something like that I watch for it, you know, I'll say 'did I do it a little bit different now that I felt that little, felt it a little bit?' and then try to remember what you did so that, the next time you can try to get that same feeling again.

INT- Ok. So it sounds like you're concentrating on those couple of moves that you work on, you're really concentrating on how you're body's feeling, and whether you're getting the results that you hear about from the instructor, is that right?

RA- Yeah

INT- And that at other times what you're doing is you're watching people who you know do those moves very well, and trying to emulate them?

RA- Yep, if they're present or I can get into a position where I can. Sometimes I can't. Sometimes they're not there

INT- And then at other times you say you talked about how sometimes when you do it you're almost in a bit of a daze.

RA- yeah

INT- Can you tell me more about that? I'm curious about that one

RA- You like that one do you?

INT- Yeah, I think that's interesting

RA- Well I think everybody who does it a long period of time finds that at some point they'll slip into that. Uh. I heard it explained that uh, uh when you're learning – and I really can't verify this part of it but, that when you're learning you're using the 'Tai' part of the of the, to guide your body, and then uh after you progress, the 'chi' has learned the moves, your body has learned the moves in other words, and they take over. So I guess it would be similar to, anything that you do, often enough, but you have to learn through your brain, I assume that's what they meant when they said 'tai'. And you learn these exercises in this order, and then, if you do it enough times, it becomes such a habit that your body can do it, and your brain is now, free. I don't ever go a whole set that way, but, sometimes I go quite a ways with it – I don't I don't plan it, it just happens.

INT- Ok. What goes through your mind at that point in time? Are you thinking about anything?

RA- Sometimes, yeah, maybe you're thinking about, maybe what you have to do in the afternoon, or maybe something that's bothering you, comes into focus, or sometimes, it's almost, almost blank. Which uh, I relate to the thought that I heard, someone told me that, 'that's moving meditation'. And I think that's where that would come in. Some of these things you just hear the phrase and, and if it applies you seem to want to use it, so I'm not really, you know, I really don't know that much about the inner workings of tc, uh whenever I get a chance I try to listen and, find out what I can,, but I'm not, not really much knowledge around that line

INT- Right, oh ok. But it sounds to me like you do experience something, just a little bit different than just concentrating on the moves and what's coming up next, at those points in time when you feel like you've been in a bit of a daze.

RA- Yeah. My wife feels like that too sometimes

INT- Oh ok. Um, you said sometimes what happens is a problem will come up into focus for you.

RA- Yeah, an outside problem. Something, may be a small thing like you think about when you got in the car and you were coming to class, you noticed you need gasoline, well the easy way to get that is on the way home because we can swing over a block and go by the gas station so, all of sudden you're doing this tc and this thing pops into your head 'get gas!', you know [laughs]. You know, a simple thing like that, uh, other times it could be a little more complicated problem, or perhaps even a problem that isn't there but you think it's there, you know, we all have those I assume.

INT- Right. But when those thoughts come, does that actually distract you from doing the moves correctly?

RA- If they come too often yeah I get lost.

INT- oh ok,

RA- Uh, I want to miss a set of moves. Common one is 'Fair Lady' If you're not, if you get too far out of focus you want to skip that one and go into the 7 wave Hands

INT- Oh, ok so you're just saying you just miss a little section

RA- Yeah you want to. But I find in that series of moves, if anybody's going to make a mistake in the set, that's where they're going to do it. The moves look similar to start with you know, [demonstrates from chair] single whip, you're goin' this way instead of this way you move the hands

INT- Oh ok so you kinda get turned around

RA- and when you see them, oh yeah that's you know, and you drift into it. But I notice a lot of people miss that one.

INT- Ok. And then you said sometimes you're mind just goes blank almost.

RA- Yeah it's uh [pause] it's, well you could think of it as – like dream state. And, but there's no real intensity to it. You're just very lightly, very light mode, and your body's doin' all this stuff and it just feels good. You let it go. I mean what's the good of havin' a good feeling if you can't enjoy it eh [laughs]

INT- ok. At that point in time, are you still aware of the people around you or other sounds – like I hear traffic sounds out here so I'm assuming that when you're doin when you're practising there's still that going on – are you aware of these things?

RA- Yeah, not not, as much as you normally would be but, it's you can still pick it up. Like if you wanted to, you could eliminate – at that point you could eliminate any particular outside sensation you wanted and leave the rest, I think you could be that selective

INT- Really

RA- I think so, I've never tried it but I'll have o try it sometime I think it's possible. Because your mind is really free. It's functioning but it's free. It's very interesting

INT- Yeah, it is. It sounds like um, when you were working, that you had to have quite a very focused concentration on what you were doing I think you were saying

RA- Yes, that's right

INT- Do you find that's the same when you do your tc? Do you use that very focused concentration?

RA- No, it's entirely, that experience is entirely different from this. It's uh, but even then you could hear other sounds in the shop of course, but you just didn't talk to anybody, and they pretty much left you alone because, you know, you're concentrating so hard especially if you had a large crankshaft, they wouldn't talk to you for days, it's take 2 days to grind this shaft, and uh, you know they wouldn't ask you any questions that they didn't have to

INT- Ok. But that job, doing that work alone and with that high concentration, did that allow your mind to go blank or do those things, that you get that experience in tc?

RA- No, not at all, you couldn't let go for a second – all that iron flying around and big stones grinding away [laughs]

INT- Don't want to be daydreaming then

RA- no [laughs. No you had to be pretty well up on everything at that time. Mind you when you got into some of the simpler shafts you could think of other things but, it was very rare that you worried about anything except getting this done.

INT- So this must be kind of a nice experience for you or kind of a novel experience for you then having your mind feel free

RA- Yeah it is, I think it would be for anybody, no matter what they did cause uh, even in yoga there, we tried uh, meditating and, the best I could do was meditate through a picture image, to, focus your mind on this particular scene or whatever and you could really let the rest of it go. With this tc, you don't have to that at all

INT- Like you don't find that you have to picture anything in your mind

RA- No, it's just uh, like meditation would be I think if I could do meditation I think that's what it would be like. Sitting down and trying to meditate it just never worked for me.

INT- Um, so you talked a little bit about how your body feels when you practise and you talked a bit about what's going through your mind, um, do you, have you noticed that over the years that you've done tc that, is there something that's changed about you , about how you think or, how you feel emotionally, your mood that sort of thing, when you compare to how you were before you started the tc and you look at yourself now?

RA- Yeah, I think I mentioned that I was more relaxed with people. But I think I'm more relaxed, all the time. Uh, I still get uptight and I still get angry sometimes but, it doesn't last, so. And I don't get out of control like I used to. Of course, from when I started to now, you see I've retired, and have a lot less problems that way [pause] but uh, just in general, uh, I'm more relaxed at most times you know.

INT- Oh ok, alright. Is that um, you had said that that is a difference from how you were before. Can you just give me a bit of a sense of – can you give me some examples of that? Like how, I don't know, like how you might deal with a situation now compared to how you dealt with them before or, just some examples from your own life?

RA- Yeah, I think the uh, one that is probably good and maybe the most beneficial is uh, if I'm driving and uh, since I'm not in a hurry I don't drive very fast, usually go about 50 km instead of the 60 – or somewhere in between – and somebody gets anxious and, cuts me off or something. If I'm with my wife I jut look over at her and say [smiles] 'gee that guy must be in a hurry' you know 'I wonder is he going to work, he must have a real good job if he's going to work and he's you know in such a hurry to get there'. Whereas before I'd get mad, and, I probably wouldn't do anything, but I know my blood pressure would go up and I would start to swear, and that would really get my wife mad and she would say 'you don't have to use that kind of language' and that would get me worse [laughs]

INT- Oh ok [flip tape] Um, so you find that just your, you feel that your mood, you're not as easily angered as before is that what you're saying

RA- Yeah. And if it does like do slip and get angry about it, it doesn't last. Start to calm down and get a chance to think about what happened and you know 'how serious is this?' guy cuts you off well, think, you have to step on the brakes for, a couple of seconds and let him in, you know, because he's crowding so much that you're scared that you're gonna hit him, but, well, that's ok.

INT- Right. Ok alright. You had said something about control or out of control as well. Is that an example of that? Or were you thinking of something else?

RA- Uh yeah sometimes I [long pause] lose control and uh, maybe even get violent but not with people, but, maybe break something, cause it deserved it or something, some inanimate objects [laughs] that did me wrong – well how could it, you know, really? You know, what I did didn't, treat the object in a way that it would respond in the way I wanted, but then I have to blame the object. And then I would be uh, hit it with a hammer or something. But that's a long time since I've been that bad.

INT- [pause] Mhm, oh alright. Um, have you um, experienced – well maybe tell me a little bit more in detail how you feel tc has benefited you in any other way that you haven't talked about before, if you want to give more detail, either, physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, anything you want, anything you feel.

RA- It's pretty tough cause I think I've just about covered everything. Uh

INT- Either short term effects or long term, if there's something that we've missed

RA- Well one thing uh, I had a check up 2 weeks ago, I get one every year, it's just routine, and the Dr. used to take, tc at one time, so every time I go he asks me you know ' you still doin' tc' and I said 'yeah'. And I get the impression from him that, that 's helped in some way, you know, my overall physical uh being in some way, that 's the impression that I get from him, cause actually, I'm in pretty good shape other than, you know, well

I have to take that medication, you know, don't have any real problems now, it's it's really a treat you know

INT- Is that a big change from before fro you as far as your health?

RA- Yeah, but again I think that new medication they came out with is really a dandy. I took that for about a month and all the pain is ____

INT- Oh ok, so you're still on medication for your RA,

RA- yeah

INT- and for your HTN?

RA- yeah

INT- Ok

RA- Very small doses of HTN pills

INT- That's good

RA- Yeah. And each of these I take 1 pill a day, and I take them all in the morning, shoot 'em all down at once and, then have breakfast

INT- Ok. It sounds like your Dr. is uh – does he encourage you to keep up with tc?

RA- Oh yeah. He uh I think he would encourage anything but he does encourage tc. Uh he says he hasn't got time for it but, he knows the value of it, he took enough, he took it long enough to realize how much it can do for, your body anyway, he never took – got into it enough to maybe understand the spiritual part of it

INT- For you has there been a spiritual I guess benefit of being involved in this?

RA- Yeah sometimes I, well there's a learnin part to it – I don't know whether it's actually spiritual, where, um, the Taoist, religion I guess you'd call it, is uh the time I learned there it was very similar to the Christian religion you know you have the 3 deities and in the Christian religion there's the 3 deities in one, and I was told at one time, that both Christian and the Taoist almost originated at the same time, so I I don't know for sure but. So even in that respect, I don't go to these, to the church here but -

INT- Oh, to this temple

RA- yeah because they have chanting and they actually have some services here, and I don't bother with that, but I find no conflict between that and – well I'm Anglican faith you know, born an Anglican – and I find no conflict there at all. Uh, maybe if I was RC I might, because of their stricter – I don't know very much about that either, I think there could be a conflict there, but it wouldn't be a major one.

INT- How about um, when we talk about spirituality in general, just the whole idea about sort of finding meaning in life and so on, you know, not strictly just religion. Have you noticed anything there/ Has tc brought you anything in that form?

RA- Just uh, a casual feeling about the whole relation ship between man and religion, because there's the stress is off everything, so, um, I like to believe there's something after life, but I don't set up a set rule for myself that if I don't do this then I have to do that, if I don't then I'm going to lose the benefit of this afterlife. That's kinda gone now. It's uh, maybe it's just living, maybe it's just getting older, [pause] uh as far as this connection between religion and health and that, in a regular accepted way, it seems that either we're doing something awfully wrong, or there isn't any relationship at all, because I'm sure you've noticed that uh, some of the nicest people, the best people you know, are – have some terrible diseases, and you say 'ok, uh if we're that strong in our faith then even if that person isn't, if there's enough of us we should be able to help her, either that or help him' I said 'her' because my sister was like that. And, it doesn't happen. I'm not really saying 'ok it didn't happen, so that wipes out the whole theory' you know, but I'm sayin' if it doesn't happen often enough, you begin to have kinda doubts about some of these things. Maybe we're getting off the track here.

INT- No that's ok. So do you find that still bothers you, or that's not as big a problem now?

RA- Yeah, it's uh, one day a t a time kind of thing. If you're gonna, spend your remaining years worrying about what's gonna happen after you leave this life, then you're wasting a lot of time, so, if you can be relaxed enough to accept the uh, possibility, and uh, say 'that'll be a good thing' but don't dwell on it so that you're wasting time and energy and worrying and probably bringin' on more, doin' your body more harm than good because of the worry. But again it might be just old age, retirement, I'm like 'who cares'

INT- Ok, alright. How about uh, as far as your things like your memory and your concentration and so forth, have you noticed any change that you think is related to tc?

RA- No I don't think so. I've always had a good memory for some subjects and others other things, if it's just garbage or something I can remember that like forever. If it 's a how to do a math equation or, that's gone right away. And I think sometimes – I've heard my wife say this too – that, she remembers things, that happened a long time ago, they come quite clear to her. And yet sometimes when I tell her things, one day and then I have to tell her again the next day, you know, she can't, she's starting to get a little bit that way, but I find that I can remember just about everything. But uh, I do get these, some incident will happen, and 'oh yeah, I remember' something related, or similar to that that happened when I was a kid.

INT- So, tell me after doing tc for so long, what keeps it uh, does it ever get boring for you? Does it ever get repetitious?

RA- Yeah, some days, uh [pause] warm up exercises get to be a drag, but you do them – but there again if you're feeling better, they go easier. And, when the instructor's going over a move, you've gone over this many times, many many times, you begin to think well, you know, you probably know that as well as she does, or something, and then you say 'hey, wait a minute, that's not the way to think' and then you start thinkin' 'well, see now you're not payin' attention that's what's wrong'. And you see that the instructor has learned something, through her practise and her coming to these Friday night, uh, instructor programs, that she's learned a little, something a little different. Now if you're really careful, you can see what she's doing, and she may not be aware of it, now that's the other hard part, but, having done it so many times with that woman instructor you can say 'yeah, she's improved that step' and then, make a judgment as to whether it's a definite improvement or whether it's just a different, phase. So, you have to judge that by watching the senior instructors and compare. So, if you can do that, that keeps your interest up. Cause there's very, actually there's very few moves that you can't improve on. Either because you understand them better, or you've been shown, a little different way, which, when I say improve them I mean improve the benefit of them you know, the stretch and so on. So there's very few that you can't always improve on. And if you keep that in mind I think uh, it kinda cuts down on the boredom. Like everything else uh, you can't always focus like you want to and, these things seep and slip in you know.

INT- Yeah, cause I was sort of wondering what is it that kept it interesting for you, after such a long time, cause you learned the 108 moves and this is what you practise so, yeah, I wondered what kept it interesting

RA- yeah well there's never, there's no end to it you see. And, some of these things, moves, you're not capable of doing them at one point, because you don't have enough of the, physical skill or, uh, looseness kind of thing, or, mentally you don't understand it as you should. So with these things, like the more you work on it, the more it opens up to you. And, the more you understand, it's like everything else, the more you know about it, you realize how little you know. So it's always a, an ongoing, learning system. But there's days when you just don't wanna learn, you know you think 'nah'. But if you can get into that frame of mind then you, you can pick up

INT- Is um, you had mentioned it just popped back into my mind you had mentioned something about how when you first start, when you did the first bow, you know how that set is gonna be for you, at least from your back and your hips

RA- yep

INT- Um, what did you mean by that?

RA- Well it started when I was really stiff from that arthritis and my knees were bad and if I, if I couldn't get that bow – on a bad day I wouldn't be able to get my hands past my knees. Now, now on a bad day I can get down to my ankles but I can't get to the floor – on a good day I still can't to the floor, but I do it, the knees aren't locked they're slightly bent, and I can get down fairly close, so, it's a relative thing there. And, after the set, we do the final bow, I can quite often see a difference there, you know, depending on how bad it was to start, maybe I can gain maybe another inch, just by loosening everything up, you see, so what, maybe the warm up exercises didn't do everything they should do, or maybe I was a little bit stiff that day, due to the weather conditions or something, and if I'm stiff and I can't make it then the other thing is that, that I find is that, your balance is not as good when you're stiff because, one muscle reacts with the other muscles and if your balance isn't good then you don't have a good set I don't think. Cause some of the movements, I find trouble with if my balance is way off even those simple first kicks are, are a little bit wobbly.

INT- right. Ok, but you said that by the end of the set you find you are able to bend down a little further

RA- Sometimes

INT- Oh sometimes, oh ok

RA- Uh most of the time

INT- Is that about your hips or your back or both?

RA- Probably everything. Just a stiffness, a general stiffness. I used to notice something in the weather it's uh, I talked to the Dr. about it one time and he said it's uh atmospheric pressure. And it doesn't matter whether the atmospheric pressure is going up or going down, it's just that it changes.

INT- Ok, you feel it in your bones, right? You had also mentioned something about movement of internal organs. Can you tell me something about that?

RA- Not not much no. Other than uh -

INT- this is something, is this something you heard about or read about?

RA- Oh Madeline uh, gave us a little talk here one of the – about a month ago. But I'd heard about it over the – Mr. Moy used to say here, the internal organs are stuck together like cold spaghetti, and the idea is to get them moving against each other get the, to get the lubrication, like it's the external organs use it but, to get them moving, to get the stomach to work. And uh, I don't know if you've noticed but, a lot of the people who've done tc for a long time kind of develop a pot belly, you've seen that? Well, Madeline had this explanation that, because you're standing, relaxed all the time, you're not sucking everything in, and that give your organs room to move. And uh, like if you have your, this female glass type figure, you know, hourglass figure, uh it squashes all your organs in and pushes up your diaphragm which affects your lung capacity. But if you are standing loose all the time, then this, has a chance to – your diaphragm has a chance to go down, but the muscles – the muscles are still there but they're used to being in a position that's extended rather than contracted. And uh lets these organs move. Some of the moves, in fact I think all of the moves are designed, to move those internal muscle-internal organs.

INT- Interesting. Do you get that sensation yourself?

RA- [laughs] I I can't feel any movement in there no. But I-I

INT- No I've heard about it before but that's an interesting explanation

RA- I-I kinda take it for granted that that's what's happening. I know that my stomach has come out and it's not all fat its, its uh – there is way too much but that's not the cause of the stomach coming out.

INT- Oh ok, alright. Um, the last thing I just wanted to ask you was um, maybe we'll finish off with what is it that you like best about doing tc?

RA- [pause] Out of the whole schmozel?

INT- Out of all this, what is it you like the best about practising tc?

RA- I think the one thing that I uh is that I started out to do this, and it was a very difficult, for me, uh, I guess because of the pain in my knees when I was learning, but I, I stuck to it and I've accomplished to be able to do it at least reasonably well. I'm no expert or anything like that, don't get me wrong, but, I can, do it with, a certain amount of flowing and a certain – and the fact that I've accomplished that is, I think it is, for me that's really something.

INT- Right, you had talked about a sense of achievement

RA- Yeah it is. It's a real, uh - because there were times when I didn't wanna do it. But I thought 'well, it's gonna be good for my health, and I'm having all these problems and maybe I should give it a try, and one year wasn't gonna do it" and you know 'I can feel some benefits after the first year', sticking to it and uh getting to where I am now which is, beginning to learn, just beginning to learn

INT- Just be ginning. Well are there any other things, any other thoughts that you have – I've asked you a lot of questions but sometimes you know, there's something that didn't get addressed in the session. Do you want to add anything?

RA- [long pause] No, I don't I don't think so. I probably said more than I thought I would say. Uh I didn't know how this was gonna work out. I think you asked some pretty penetrating questions and I hope the answers were, well they were honest as far as I'm concerned, that's the way I feel and that's the way I look at it. It may not correspond with anybody else, but I'm sure parts of it would. And, since we're all, all different, not only physically, but mentally, and spiritually, everything new, or, even relates to us, to each and every one of us in a different way. Uh, I'm not really hard sell on it, I think I mentioned that, you know, my wife wants everybody to do it because she does it you know, I I – you can say so much and then, after that you're just wasting their time and your time. But I think that's about all I can really come up with

INT- Ok. Well if you have any other thoughts you can always let me know, that would be fine. Thank you very much for participating and providing me with your thoughts and your experiences. I really appreciate that.

RA- Yeah, that's alright. Actually, I guess it's like any other, something to do, that you talk about more than you think about, would normally think about, you're really brining out the fine points, because somebody's asking you. And so, you get a more in-depth look at yourself, not only in relation to that particular subject, but to other things that are, are uh, almost everything else. Because you can't take one subject and have it, isolated, you know.

INT- So you're feeling like this sort of, this process sort of made you reflect a little bit is it?

RA- Yeah, yeah and uh, it made me bring out some of the, think about some of the good things about it. I don't think there's anything, I don't think there was anything really bad about it, I haven't ran across anything that I would mark as, uh 'do not do this' you know. Though some of them do those butterfly snakes – have you seen those?

INT- No I haven't

RA- Well they go and they turn and they go right down, and then they come up, they're coming up on the other leg and then they go down. So they're sitting right down on the floor. And uh there's some other thing that they do that are similar – I just can't, I can't get down on the floor so I just can't handle those – anytime they do that I just sit down and watch, or, if I really feel like it I maybe do some more Dan Yus or something. But uh, you have to be really flexible to do that

INT- Yeah, sounds like that comes at a certain level

RA- Well one of the things that they said is uh women are more flexible, that the men generally have more strength. I can only see it from one side of the fence [laughs]

INT- well I'll stop the tape then, ok?

RA- Ok.

RA (Participant ID #10)

Interview Transcript #2

Date: Nov. 22, 2001
Time of interview: 10:00-10:30
Location: TTCS-West End – upstairs practise area
Atmosphere: Comfortable, relaxed

INT- So some of these follow-up questions after the summary, now that you've had a chance actually to read through the summary was there anything else that you felt needed clarifying you wanted to add to besides that you just talked about about the moving meditation. Is there anything else that you felt needed correcting or you wanted to actually take out?
RA- No I don't – I think it's pretty good the way it is. I'm actually surprised that you can actually figure out from what I was saying that, to get it that clear
INT- Oh ok. Well, I really read through them carefully and I think that most of the things you said were really quite clear to me. It was just like those last 2 bits there [spirituality and] that I wanted to make sure that I captured what you, what you had wanted to say
RA- It's very good actually.
INT- So we'll do some of these follow-up questions I think we'll just move through them in order if that's alright with you
RA- Sure
INT- Um now, when you had started tc um, you had started at this location you told me
RA- Yep
INT- And um can you tell me what it is about, why is it you started at the west end location?
RA- It was close to home
INT- oh ok. That's fine yep
RA- And uh, if I didn't for some reason, I couldn't get the car going or something, I can take the bus
INT- Oh ok
RA- so get off at the terminal yes
INT- it's convenient then
RA- yeah it's about a 10-minute drive
INT- Ok makes sense. Alright um, I also brought your transcript because there's a couple of line numbers where I referred to [refers to transcript] It says here on line 134 it says – I was asking you about um about how you felt about tc when you saw that first demonstration and it says "... there was a lot of people, it was a big class at that time. And I saw all these people moving together...in...really close unison..." And, I was just wondering, if when you first watched that tc class, uh was there something special about about seeing this large group, playing in unison, that made an impression on you? Just because you mentioned it but I didn't know if that was...
RA- [pause] Yeah, the, it'd be similar to watching like a group of dancers and uh, like the Zyrus dancers or, you know how coordinated they are and – you know, the tap-dancing thing- but with the tc, the slower movements and the uh relaxed – I got the feeling that they were more relaxed that they were – you know they weren't like under stress. And just the idea of being able to do that, being able to join in a group and and move with them, and and, feel that relaxed while you were doing it – cause most things you do in a group you always, you know "am I doin' it right?" " what are the other people thinking" and so on. Whereas in tc they tell you you don't worry about, what other

people think because we're all learning at a different speed. So, and if you make a mistake, you should hear Bev when she makes a mistake – it's real humorous.

INT- is it?

RA- yeah

INT- Oh Albright, so it was really just that – just being able to see everybody being relaxed in a group while they're all doing this activity-

RA- Yep

INT- that really caught you. Ok. Um, you also mentioned I think that when I asked you what you liked about tc, uh, when you first saw it, um it says here "...I liked the way the moves were controlled" and I'm wondering if that was um, something that you liked when you, when you first saw the tc class or that was something you liked when you actually tried it yourself?

RA- Oh it's more when I first saw it yeah, cause when I first started I had no control. I was the worst I'm telling you, it took 3 years, to learn the set

INT- Well it sounded like you had a lot of other, things you had to deal with, while you were learning

RA- yeah

INT- Actually, that leads right into the next question, which is what helped you continue the tc class even though it was difficult and painful you at the beginning? Cause I know you certainly stressed that for you it took a long time to learn, and there was a lot of discomfort for you.

RA- Yeah I don't know I still got, even at that point I had some idea of accomplishment maybe and, and uh, I don't know even then I felt better, even when I was still learning, uh, not like I do now but, it was uh, it kept your mind off work for awhile, off everything for awhile you know

INT- You were still working when you actually started with it

RA- Yeah

INT- ok

RA- Yeah I worked for about [pause] uh must be 3 or 4 years before I, I quit working

INT- Ok

RA- I haven't worked now for 8 years

INT- right, oh ok

RA- And I enjoy every minute of it [laughs]

INT- Is that right?

RA- Some guys say 'oh gosh I got nothing to do' and you know, 'I miss the work' and that, I don't miss it at all [laughs]

INT- ok. So um, what kinds of, you said you did notice that you felt a little bit better, even at the early stages of learning tc. Um, do you recall when you started to notice some you know, some things that uh, you were feeling better, do you recall what those what those things were?

RA- Yeah, that's uh, long ways back but, I think, even then, even with bad knees I was building up some, leg strength and some, uh, some muscle around the knees, because uh, it wasn't until we were into it for a couple of years that, that I heard he expression 'step with no weight' so that you know like, you're not committed, you can withdraw that step – that's what they mean. Apparently that's a martial art technique, that, you know, you're gonna make a move and then your opponent challenges you in a different way then you can remove that. I couldn't do that at all, when I stepped I was fully committed. It seemed like you're just lunging into all the moves. So when that started to change a little bit, I felt better.

INT- Ok. You had mentioned that, even in the first year, after the first year, you had felt some improvement for you I think.

RA- Yeah I think another thing that came out of it was balance too. Not so much in the tc, but outside. And some kind of confidence started to build where –like because I hate walking on ice, I think all people do, they're always scared that they're gonna break a hip or something. And uh, at that time I was very worried about – well not worried – was aware of those things, and, even after the first while I began to have more confidence in, you know in, the kind of a reaction you would have if you slipped. I notice that now it's, like if I make a mistake in footing and I start to slip I recover, before I go down. Except for [laughs] about a month ago when I – I was trimmin' a bush and I, slipped and then my other foot tripped on a root, and I fell into the bush, [laughs] twisted my knee. But I, and that, I think, tc was there, cause when I went down and I thought 'Oh boy here we go Misericordia Hospital' you know – with the implants you're not supposed to you know, do that kind of stuff. But I got up and it was sore and I walked for a little bit and it was, pretty good and the next day I did tc, couldn't do the, the whole class, but I did part of it. I took about a month and then, right back to where it was.

INT- Oh ok yeah

RA- But that's not a benefit you look for

INT- It's interesting though. Well I think that is interesting that's something you notice so, yeah. Ok

RA- Well, if you do enough of this stuff you, you start noticing other people too, you see somebody walking towards you and they got a limp or a, one shoulder's higher than the other or something and, and you know, you can, you just automatically say 'gee that's' you know sometimes you can figure out what's wrong but I can, I never, judge anything but....when Reed was here, I guess he's the guy that started it in Edmonton, and, one time we came up here [to upstairs practise area], was just gonna sit down before they started and he said 'boy you got a bad limp there' I said 'oh that's what I came to tc for' you know. But he could pick it out right away. But he's been at it a long time, spent a lot of time with Mister Moy.

INT- Ok. So do you find now that you've been doing it for a while that you notice sometimes-

RA- yeah

INT- more

RA- You just notice notice the way people walk for some reason or another yeah. And sometimes when we're, oh just parking the car, somebody's walking across the street, my wife'll say 'gee that guy's got a bad leg or a bad knee or a hip or somethin' you know. And can tell the difference between a bad knee or a bad hip, which is pretty hard to do I find. She seems to know.

INT- Oh ok, yep, does that come from her experience before from where she was working, her background?

RA- Probably some cause she did nursing, uh, mostly with older people you know, what they call companion type thing. So she would get some from there. But I think she learned a lot from just watching people in tc

INT- Hm, interesting

RA- Yeah you see some of them come in and uh, that last class we did there's this woman came in she's a senior, and kind of bent over all the time, gee by the time, in 6 months, she's walking a lot straighter, she's taller now, cause she's so much straighter, and yeah she's really coming along she took the uh, training class. She's really doing this because she has some other medical problems and the Dr. suggested that she take it. We get quite a few like that now.

INT- Is that right? Oh ok. Alright. You had mentioned also that tc just helps you relax overall, around other people and just as a person in general. Do you find that that sense of relaxation kind of spills over into other aspects of your life, for example sleeping or anything like that?

RA- Yeah I don't have much trouble sleeping but I, I notice on the Saturday where we do Lok hup then Saturday night I'm just zonked right out, sleep right through don't, you know never wake up, because it's more strenuous I guess. Or maybe I'm more tense because I don't know it. But uh, but generally I feel more relaxed around people than I, I did before. It would be terrible doing this thing [interview] if uh, if I was still working in that situation I'd have a terrible time. But I think it's, well it's easy for me now, I don't know what it's like for you [laughs]

INT- it's always a different experience with every one I do that's for sure. But that 's good, that's nice to see that you can be relaxed to do this kind of thing yeah

RA- I don't get uptight so much

INT- kay. Um, and at one point in time you had said that you were – I think this was at the very end o f our first interview that uh, you were actually doing tc um, or you tried to do tc something like 4 times a week is it?

RA- Oh yeah, that didn't last too long, uh, it was just too much and, you could do it but I started to lose interest. So I went down to 3 nights and then down to – back down to 2 nights and, and that seemed to be an acceptable limit. But at that time I was working and I was probably pretty tired all the time.

INT- Oh so you were working and trying to take the 4 classes

RA- Yeah

INT- a week

RA- at night yeah

INT- oh ok that's a lot

RA- Yeah, all the classes were up here at night cause we didn't own the building at that time

INT- Oh right. So do you also practise at home at all now?

RA- no

INT- So it's just in the classes then

RA- Just at the classes. Probably should but I don't

INT- Ok. I was just curious. Um ok and then the last question referred to something else here about um [checks transcript] let's see line 254, uh, when I asked you about what is it that you feel keeps you um, keeps you staying with tc basically, you said here that "...outside of getting things, getting my body more flexible, and then, becoming aware of how it works on the internal organs...' and you thought that it might help you it says um '...I have some other things I do that aren't too good [laughs] and this might help a bit' and I was just wondering if you can think back and tell me, if you don't mind, what kind of things you were referring to and how you feel tc might be helping with it

RA- Oh well what I had in mind I uh I wouldn't want to go in here

INT- Oh ok that's fine

RA- But it's nothing serious- I can tell you if you want – you can take the tape off

INT- I'll just turn it off [discussion continued with tape off].

Stan (Participant ID #11)

Interview Transcript #1

Date: Dec 3, 2001
Time of interview: 11:00-11:30
Location: TTCS-West End – upstairs practise area
Atmosphere: Comfortable, relaxed

INT- OK, so I was just looking over your your bkgd information sheet, and um, I think, I don't think I have any further questions really from there, um, so we'll just start on the guiding questions that I had you look over. And if you can just tell me a little bit about how did you get started in Tai Chi

ST- Right, ok. Well my son lives in HK, and uh, he met a gal from Malaysia, and they're now married, and this was in 1994, 95, and uh, their parents came over to visit, in the summer of 1996. And her mother is an instructor of tc in Malaysia. And at that time she was about 56 and we were uh, very impressed with how, flexible she was and what great shape and, and so she put on some tc demonstrations for us, for my wife and I and so on. And so we became interested and uh looked into the Tai Chi Society that fall and started.

INT- Oh ok

ST- doing tc

INT- How did you hear about this, this place?

ST- Oh, this place? Um [pause] I think we looked just looked in the phone book, for Taoist TC, and I think we phoned them – or maybe there was an ad in the paper, I think that's what it was, simultaneously I think there was some, some advertisement in the paper that we saw. And, at that time they had a uh centre by the university so that's where we went to start with. And uh, so we uh, we haven't been going absolutely continuously, like, I usually take 2 or 3 months off in the summer, and my wife is pretty much, well she started again this fall, but she's been very sick, so she hasn't been coming.

INT- Oh I see, oh ok. So you started back in 95 then is it?

ST- '96. Fall of '96

INT- Ok. And then you started at the university but with this society-

ST- this society, yeah. They had a centre there. And that's been closed and they moved, they opened up a new centre on 82nd, street, you know, down near 95th, 96th

INT- Yeah, I've seen that.

ST- Yeah

INT- and so uh, so what ended up having you – like what got you to transfer to the West end-

ST- Well, uh um, I think they were closing up that centre and moving, and we found out – we live in Riverbend- and this is really just as close, as the other centre. And we've gone actually back and forth, we we have been to the other, the new centre they have, we were there for, I think a, a winter or 2, and then uh but it that got very crowded so we decided to come here, 2 or 3 years ago, and this is, much better. It's actually-

INT- the classes aren't so big is it

ST- Yeah, and this is actually closer.

INT- Oh ok

ST- Turns out, it's easier to get to

INT- Oh ok. So um, if you can think back to when you did first see tc, can you tell me what it was about it that, that uh-

ST- Well I think the uh, the idea that it wasn't um, difficult – it, it's difficult to understand, but it's not diffi-physically difficult to do. It - well it is in a way, but it it, it's not a hard exercise, in other words, I had some knee problems and it wasn't difficult on my knees, it was actually helpful. You know, as compared to um some other exercises where you're pounding more on your knees, and uh, I wasn't that interested in taking very difficult physical exercise, like weight lifting. It just doesn't appeal to me much.

INT- Oh ok

ST- and uh, so this is uh, so we just kinda got into it, and I think the fact that it is, fairly difficult to master, you know, it's kinda like dance steps or something, it has an appeal in terms of like it's a challenge, I mean it's not dead easy, you know, it's not as if you're doing repetitions that are mindless

INT- Mm, alright, so it stays kind of interesting for you-

ST- Yeah, yeah because it is a challenge to learn it. And I think to start with, we did wonder whether we should be in it because it was such a challenge to, to kind of master that routine. But I mean, they uh, as you know they have a program of taking it pretty slow so, after a while we realized that, we could likely cope with it.

INT- Ok. What is it, you know when you said that, that at the beginning, you weren't even sure whether or not you should be there

ST- Yeah

INT- What is it that kept you there?

ST- Well, I think um, I think we enjoyed, actually we enjoyed coming, we felt better. And I find, I was working then and I had quite a stressful job, so I found that I uh, I could kinda unwind – it it really is, if you're into it it absorbs your thinking, I mean, some exercise patterns you know, you can do them and be reading a paper or watching TV or something. They're not very um, they don't involve your mind. But this was really a combination of involving that you had to sorta dedicate your thinking to it, whole you're doing it. Which is a little more unusual than, a lot of the other exercises you did. And so, um, I found it just relaxing, to do it, and uh, the more we got into it the more we liked it. And then I think then you want to, want to be able to complete the, the training. I don't usually like to start something and then give it up, without giving it a fair shot.

INT- So once you completed your training, that 108 moves right

ST- right

INT- then, uh, you were done with that. So what next?

ST- Well, I think the uh, I think the set, to be quite honest I couldn't do the full set myself, even now. I could from time to time in the past but, uh, I find that it's still challenging, I, you know I find it uh, it's not boring, you know I think it continually is challenging and I'm not one of these that somehow is – I haven't' likely done it often enough like during the week or month to really learn the set, I mean I could – and I never aspired to be an instructor. And so, to me it's always challenging and interesting and, we have, moved around with different instructors, which I find very useful. I don't think I've had the same, continuing class instructor for more than 2 years at a time. And I think that's good

INT- was that something by choice?

ST- Well kind of. If I ever kinda thought that I'd give it up, what has usually prompted me to keep coming is changing instructors and just finding that, you know, somebody else's approach and so on. You know, and I think, since 1996, we've likely had at least 5 different instructors. And I think that uh, that helps. Uh, yeah, no, yeah 5, yeah. Well actually, I I retook the course a couple of times.

INT- Oh, the beginning

ST- Yeah. Because my wife dropped out for a year or so and then she wanted to come back, and she wanted to start over again, so I went with her, and we actually took it from Phyllis, over at the other centre. And I think that's good to do once in a while, go back and, it's kinda boring because, you know you take, you're not participating as much, during the first 3 months, cause you're watching the instructor and she goes through3 moves, and then, so it's a bit more, drawn out -

INT- much slower pace isn't it-

ST- yeah yeah,

INT- than the continuing class

ST- yeah yeah

INT- Ok. Um, maybe we'll go to question 2 is, how would you describe Tai Chi to someone who had never seen it before?

ST- Uh, I think you'd describe it as a uh, exercise similar to, low level ballet or, um, an exercise that involves thinking and um, using all your muscles, and assisting in your circulation, and um, low-intensity. Cause I think that, a lot of people that watch it say 'well, you're not getting much of a work out' but, uh I find that if you do it continuously for 3/4 of an hour, you do get a workout from it.

INT- how do you feel when you practise tc for about 3/4 of an hour – how do you know you're getting a workout?

ST- Well I think your heart rate goes up, I've actually measured my heart rate after an hour

INT- Have you?

ST- Yes. And um, you just feel, like your muscles have had some exercise. Like you can feel it in your shoulder muscles you can feel it in your leg muscles, I've sometimes had to stop for a while because, the muscles are tired – more so than out of breath like I don't think I've ever been, I've had to stop because I'm winded. It's basically that I've stopped because some muscles, have enough

INT- Ok. You said that you measure your heart rate. What does it go up to?

ST- It doesn't go up as high as it should. Mine is generally around uh 60, and it can get up to maybe 100 or 110, which is not, you know, it's not like running 3 miles and get it up to 150 or 140 but it does go up.

INT- Right yeah, oh interesting. Now, you really stressed at the beginning that, for you, when you were working, that it was helpful for your stress level. Can you tell me more about that?

ST- Yes, I think that when you're working and you've got some problems at the office, this doesn't always happen, but, uh you're kinda thinking about them after work, you know, you you sort of take them home with you, you're still mulling them around. And I think that if you go to something like tc, it's a great distraction, I mean, your concentrating on the tc and it sort of blocks out a lot of other noises going on, in your mind. And I think that, I've often felt refreshed. Now, since I stopped working, we find it easier to come during the daytime because, I think as you get, older, and not necessarily as you get older, but, uh, I don't particularly like to exercise in the evenings before I go to bed. I'd rather exercise in the daytime.

INT- can you tell me more about that?

ST- Yeah, I think I have trouble sleeping – like I used to play badminton tennis in the evenings and I found that if you really have a rigorous workout, it's difficult to settle back and get to sleep, I mean you know, it takes you, couple hours to kind of unwind from, and um, I just felt that also, in the evenings you're more tired and you're likely not as receptive to, tc as you would be during the day, you know your mind is not as sharp and you just feel, um, you're just not as, I don't think your body and mind are in as good a sh- like mine aren't as receptive as they could be. And also, -

INT- Like in terms of your concentration?

ST- Yeah, concentration and and ability to uh – concentration and ability of the body to you know, to absorb the whole hour and a half. Yeah and so, also I think in the evenings um, you generally are coming after dinner, which is not necessarily – I mean, you know, you're kinda rushing you know, you'll rush through dinner and then you rush to get to tc. Now if you're working there's nothing much you can do about it, but after, if, now that I'm retired you got more flexibility, uh, we didn't see much point in coming in the evening, just rushed things along.

INT- yeah, well, this sounds like this time slot works well for you

ST- yeah, right

INT- Ok, um, let's talk a little bit about what happens for you when you're actually in the process of practising a tai chi set. Can you tell me a bit, even if what you want to do is walk me through from sort of beginning, how things feel in the middle and then the end

ST- yeah, right, yeah. I think that um, it's it's I found that particularly in the last year or two, that it's an exercise you kinda get into, and, I kind of enjoy doing the moves. You know, I really enjoy the various moves and I kinda look forward to doing them, my body feels good. Um, and it's hard to describe but I actually, look forward to doing the sets, because there's a number of moves in there I just like doing. And uh, I like doing it in a group atmosphere. I can't seem to do it, I don't seem to uh get that level of intensity at home – I mean, I do some at home, but it's basically the foundation exercises but I've – well for space and other things I, I've really never tried to do a set very much at home, I do some of the moves but it, I think one thing about tc and maybe about group exercises, we can go for an hour on group exercises, doing it at home I rarely go as long as 15 or 20 minutes I don't know, you just don't get the concentration, you know things distract you easily. And, maybe I'm not disciplined enough but I [laughs] I find it difficult to think of doing 1/2 hour of tc at home

INT- well tell me then about about when you come to your class here and you're involved with the group, what is it about the group that you find -

ST- I think the fact that um, you can watch what the moves are, easily, so you don't have to concentrate as much on what's coming up cause you can get a clue, just watching the instructor, he usually goes through the sets with us. And I think that, uh, having the instructor, as you know tc, is quite a sophisticated exercise, and it's just little moves that can throw you off, and I like to follow the instructor, you know, basically follow all his hands and all the whole motion. And I think it keeps one, disciplined to exactly how the moves should look, you don't take, you're not as inclined to take shortcuts, you know, or leave off part of the move, and and I think that with tc, you know, you could be doing it 10 years and not master the thing so I don't think it's something that you can say well you know 'I've been doing fro 3 years, I know all there is to know' I I found that it's maybe like figure skating or something, to become a real master at it you likely need to put in 10 or 12 years and you need to get at it fairly intensely for 4 or 5 years, which I haven't done, so I'm I would still you know I'm still, in the process. And even in the last year or 2, I've learned a lot of new things about tc, just the way the moves go.

INT- Ok, Now you said that when you practise tc that you, your body enjoys how some of the moves go.

ST- Yes

INT- can you tell me a bit more about that. Can you give me n example

ST- Well, I think um [pause] well, do you want me to demonstrate?

INT- If you want you can yep

ST- Cause I don't know all the moves. Yeah, but [stands up and demonstrates [repulse the monkey] there's one that goes like this you know, and I like that one, and the one that goes, it's the variation of that one and then, just moving the arms and legs I just feel that it feels good, you know the muscles in the back and the arms, and the legs feel good. In fact I've noticed that um, after doing tc for quite a long time that it's not that I'm building up a bunch of muscles that are noticeable, but they are firmer, all my back

muscles are firmer than they used to be, and my arm muscles. They're not necessarily bigger, they're firmer.
INT- Ok, so it's like a toning -
ST- Yeah, right
INT- of the muscles
ST- yeah. And the same with leg muscles, I think they're tones up more
INT- Now, um, I wanna – you mentioned that when you do tc it just absorbs your thinking.
ST- mhm
INT- I'd like you to describe to me a bit more about what do you think about what goes through your mind when you do a tc set
ST- um, well a lot of it has to do with concentrating on the moves. You know, I don't think, I'm not thinking anything spiritual or anything like that, I mean it's just basically I find that I'm just kind of absorbed in the moves and what's coming next and, and it it, I just, in that sense find it relaxing. It's it's something that's uh, you know, uh, when you're concentrating on the move, it's not bothersome or worrisome. It's just absorbing.
INT- Right, ok, so you're thinking of, are you thinking about what's coming next or,
ST- yes, yeah, and making sure you're executing properly.
INT- Ok alright. That sort of, that sounds like that sort of feeds into how much you're watching your instructor as well -
ST- yes,
INT- isn't it?
ST- yeah, and the people around you
INT- Oh ok. Um, now you've told me a little bit about some of the things that you think tc has done for you you mentioned about your muscles feeling firmer-
ST- right
INT- and so on
ST- yeah
INT- and also that you've had a little bit of stress reduction when-
ST- right yeah
INT- you were doing your job. Um, in terms of in terms of reducing your stress and relaxing did you find that um, that doing tc has a lasting effect, or does it just a – while you were doing it-
ST- Uh. I I think that there – well there's 2 things to that. Reducing the – well it's hard to measure whether how long the stress is reduced I mean it certainly reduced you know, for a couple of hours, but, whether it last a week or something, I wouldn't know. Yeah, but also I should mention that I've had arthritic knees. And I find tc is very helpful
INT- How so?
ST- Well, it just um, if I don't do a s- arthritis in the knees or any joint, as you would know, is one of those things where, if you don't do any exercise it gets worse, if you over exercise it gets worse. So you have to have some kind of, happy medium in there, and if you're if um if you're doing exercises for me on my knees, if I isn't too difficult, or too hard on them, um, it improves, you know, the arthritis, the arthritis isn't as severe. So I find tc to be quite a, quite a very good exercise in that regard. Now, I can overdo it with tc too, I mean, you know like, what I like about the noon hour's is that it's an hour – I was finding that an hour and a half was just too much
INT- So what kind of symptoms, what kind of arthritis symptoms do you find are helped?
ST- Uh, Well I just think I have more flexibility, and and I don't have as much soreness, and I would say I I'm not under intense pain with my arthritis, its' more stiffness and soreness, if you know the difference. So, uh, so if my arthritis is really acting up, in the extreme it would be difficult for me to walk, if I'm really, gong through a bad bout of it. And it's generally because of over-exercise in some fashion. In fact last spring I had

a session in may where I was um, gardening too heavily in Winnipeg, stooping over on my knees without getting on the ground, just bending down, picking up dandelions this, in a crouch. And I did it for about 2 hours and I didn't realize it and the next day I couldn't couldn't get out of bed, uh, my knees were so stiff and my daughter had to go get some crutches for me so. That bad. And so, but, this is the thing with the arthritis and exercise I've noticed is that you can't, you can't gauge when you're doing it, how much damage or that you might be doing, you don't know until afterwards. And so um, but with tc it's generally, uh such that I don't think it ever causes me a problem it's usually something else. Yeah, and so I find that it's a good, it's a good remedy, it's not gonna I don't think it's gonna cure it, but it keeps it under control.

INT- are there any other sort of um, I guess short-term effects that you feel tc has had for you?

ST- well, it's it's difficult to tell, I'm also, I have um high blood pressure, which I'm taking Rx for, so it's under control. Uh, but I would say that I think that it helps keep my blood pressure under control, but I can't, you know there's no way of documenting it I mean I've, I'm now, and it likely has to do with not working any longer and also watching my food and so on but, I'm taking less Rx drugs now than I have for 25 years

INT- Is that right?

ST- Yep, I'm on my lowest dosage of – and so that goes back a long time. Yeah. So I'm actually got it better under control now than I've had for 25 years.

INT- and how do you feel as far as generally?

ST- Oh I feel great, yeah I feel good, very good, yeah, yeah

INT- How about um, are there any sort of um, sort of long term effects I guess in terms of are there any things that you feel have um, have really changed for you since when you compare to before you did tc to now?

ST- Um, yeah, it's uh difficult to tell, I think it helps my flexibility uh and I think it helps my balance. Like I noticed when I for like this summer, uh we didn't we, I kinda quit in in, I quit early this spring, because in May I buggered up my knee, so I couldn't come back to tc. So I basically was off May June July August, and I didn't get back until September. And once I got back for a month or 6 weeks I found my balance was better, you know, and I find that flexibility is better. It's it's almost, it doesn't happen overnight, like one lesson isn't gonna do it, if if you've done it for like a month or 6 weeks I think you notice a difference.

INT- Mm ok.

ST- And I think that's what keeps me coming. It's It's not the uh – tc of course is not like playing tennis, I mean it's not that absorbing, it's not that much fun [laughs] or golf [laughs] you know what I mean, it's more in the lines of an aerobic or it's in that kind of category it's not in the fun cat-I mean, it may be a – it is of some pleasure, but it's not like a game.

INT- Ok so the tennis and the golf, those are really, you real loves

ST- Yeah [laughs] I mean, you don't necessarily have to do those to feel better, I mean you're doing those cause you like, like the game, right? And it would be like, maybe playing bridge or something, you know [laughs] Tennis and golf are more in the lines of having fun, and being with the people, so. Uh, so it's, I wouldn't put tc in that category

INT- So for you um, just knowing that you do this for your, to keep yourself healthy-

ST- right

INT- is enough for you to keep going

ST- Yes, yeah, and that's primarily why I come you know, because I think as I say the fun part I can likely [laughs]

INT- No that's good though if you can decide to do this for your health-

ST- Yes

INT- And that's enough for you to stick with it

ST- yes, yeah

INT- because I think that can be very difficult decision for some people to make

ST- Yes, yeah, yeah. And and uh, I guess I'm also, I would say I have to be impressed by the people that I've met here, you know, in talking to them about why they're here. Uh, and some of the stories I've heard over the years, I think are very good testimonials as to why, one should do tc. I mean, I've seen people that are, extremely committed to it like they come every day. So I'm kinda talking to them about what, you know 'Is this your life?!" [laughs] and for some of them, it makes them feel so much better that it is their life, yeah it's really a big part of their life, because of back problems or that sort of thing, that they really find relieved by -

INT- For you it sounds like it's a – it's it's one part-

ST- yes

INT- of many things that you do

ST- Yeah that's right. Yeah, I'm not uh, I'm not near as committed as a lot of people I've met here. And that's likely why I would never be an instructor or work up to that level because like you know I think you have to be like 4 or 5 times a week and come out Friday nights and, all that sort of stuff, so I'm uh, I'm more on the I would say I'm in the lower half of the participants

INT- But you come, very regularly for the past 5 years

ST- Yes, that's right/ In the wintertime I haven't missed a winter of coming, and so the only time I've been off is in the summer for like for a couple of months – and to start with, I actually did come in the summer. Um, off and on, but you know holidays come up and all that sort of stuff and you have people visiting and, uh, yeah.

INT- Ok Um, Are there any other effects that tc has had on you, either physically, mentally, emotionally, anything like that

ST- Yeah, uh [pause]

INT- or have we covered it all?

ST- I think we have I think I find I actually find the atmosphere quite relaxing you know nice people here, you know not uh, nobody's obnoxious or you know [laughs] Yeah I think the whole atmosphere is it's it's nice. And the instructors have all been, good and very helpful and if you wanna sit down or take off they're not, upset about it.

INT- Um, and I think we'll go through these ones but maybe 6 was Have you experienced any unexpected effects of Tai Chi?

ST- Uh, unexpected effects, I can't think so. No I don't think so, sometimes um, the exercise might, because of my knees or something I may not be able to finish that night but it's not an uh unexpected, you know, that might be one of the down sides of sometimes my knees are too sore to finish off a session, but that can happen with anything.

INT- yeah, ok, we talked a little bit about this one What is it about it that helps you to keep up? So um was there anything you wanted to add?

ST- well no I don't think so, uh, it just, actually I just feel better and I kinda like coming, you know it's uh, I don't find it not one of these things where you say 'oh god I gotta go to tc today' I don't feel that way I kinda I like coming. It's it's – you know so I enjoy it and I feel a lot better, and I – but it's like a lot of other things, you're not gonna have, it's not like a high-powered pill or something where you, you know you automatically, feel better, I think it takes awhile, you know it's not instantaneous, but I don't think any exercise is, you're not gonna have big muscles after one workout [laughs]

INT- that's true

ST- so the benefits are on the subtle side but, they're clearly there

INT- Alright, and um, I think you talked a little bit about how it's also kept your interest even though you've learned it now and you've gone through a few time in fact

ST- yes. Yes, actually I think I may have taken the course 3 time cause yep the first year we took it – yeah I know what happened, we started in October of '96 and then we went over to Asia for a month, and so and then that was in November and then Christmas came up so we didn't get back until January so we started again. Yeah and then I started again with my wife so I have actually started 3 times [laughs] but that doesn't mean I'm um [laughs] As I say, I still couldn't I couldn't conduct a set I mean I couldn't lead the group through a set. But I got like, if we're on a certain series I know the next 6 steps that are coming up or you know the next six-routine. But then I'd have to kinda wait and see. But after about 2 years I think, I was actually coming 3 times a week and also mastered the set. But, it's something you can forget quite easily. If you don't come for 2 months, you know the moves, but you, you don't know the order.

INT- So when you've had a break you definitely have to come back-

ST- Yeah

INT- for sort of a refresher

ST- Do you take tc?

INT- Yep

ST- Ok. And how long have you been taking it?

INT- Oh, about 7 years

ST- Oh ok. So are you at the instructor category?

INT- Um, I do some assisting

ST- Ok but you know how it would be if you were trained to be an instructor?

INT- Um, we have a different kind of a system for instruction

ST- oh ok

INT- than you do here. It's not quite as formal that way

ST- Oh I see.

INT- Yeah

ST- Ok

INT- Um, so just 2 things to finish off, one was I remember that you had mentioned that you thought tc assisted the circulation

ST- yes

INT- can you tell me more about that?

ST- Yeah, I think that um [pause]

INT- Is that from personal experience?

ST- Yeah, I just kind of feel that, I think my blood pressure is under better control and I just generally feel better, and not as inclined to, it – you know, do you recognize when your circulation is good or bad? I mean, I can tell, in a way, whether I'm, have good circulation, or it's not as good, because for one thing, um, you're more inclined to have say, cold feet in the wintertime

INT- Mhm, yeah I can relate to that [both laugh]

ST- Yeah and or, you know, cold hands. Now if your circulation is at a better level, you're not as inclined to have those symptoms are you? And you're not as inclined to feel sluggish, right? And you may not be as inclined to have minor or slight headaches. Would you think, would you agree with that?

INT- That, that I really don't know, but that's something that you feel is a-

ST- Yes, yeah

INT- for you is an effect

ST- Yeah, yeah. And I'd have to say that's true with most exercises. I think if I for some reason am traveling or whatever and I don't exercise for 3 or 4 days, I can feel it. I just don't feel as good. And I just feel sluggish and uh, it's almost like you get into a state where you don't really feel like doing any exercise, so you kind of have to boot yourself [laughs] get started again. And I think, you know there's a lot of people my age that I play tennis with and so on, and they exercise at the club quite a bit, and most of them feel the same way. You know, there's a number of people I know that um, work out quite often in the, uh equipment room at the club, you know before or after tennis, or, when they're not playing tennis as well And generally, you find that they do it because they feel better, it's not as if they're again, it's not great fun [laughs] you know particularly riding bikes and stuff, it's not like riding a bike in the countryside, you know, stationary bikes and stuff. And I find that it would be difficult for me to, maintain my interest in that sort of stuff, and I think tc is clearly a level above that. You know what I mean, it's far better than riding a stationary bike, in terms of maintaining interest and, I think as some people at the university were pointing out on this course I was taking [Live it Up] you need to do exercises that you enjoy, or at least that you don't detest, uh, or you won't do them. And, there's evidence of that they were saying and I agree with it. If you go to most garage sales there're a lot of these stationary bikes for sale, and equipment, [laughs] that's hardly been used

INT- Yeah, that's true isn't it

ST- And so, and I'd agree with that. I think if you don't like – I like gardening so I do a lot of my own gardening, I know guys that have gardeners come in, because they just don't like gardening at all, and they don't do it well, and it's a real chore for them

INT- no I think you really hit on it that it is important that you enjoy whatever activity you choose

ST- right

INT- or you're not gonna stick with it

ST- no

INT- it sounds like you've got a bit of a hierarchy of where things fit-

ST- right yeah

INT- in terms of different physical activities

ST- I think so I think so. I was involved in a study oh it'd be 8 or 10 years ago. One of the grad students at the university was uh, had something to do with sugar consumption or something. Anyway, we had to spend, 3 months on bikes, you know, 3 times a week, riding for, uh 20 minutes, and up to a half hour. And I found that a real real tough thing to do, and I had only been asked because this kid was doing this thesis on it, you know, and he need, I think there was, 60 or 75 of us started out and he needed at least 35 or 40 and people dropped off for various reasons, and uh , towards the end he was just you know, begging us to continue cause if we lost too many more [laughs] he wasn't gonna have a big enough sample to -

INT- oh no

ST- so anyway I finished the whole thing but, um, it indicated to me that I don't know if I could ever continuously ride bikes you know, this is what we were doing, riding bikes. And that was real boring , just got to be real drudge, you know so, ok

INT- So um, now you told me that tc is something that's interesting to you

ST- yeah

INT- but, not as much fun as your tennis-

ST- right [laughs]

INT- or your golf right?

ST- right

INT- What is it you feel that, it's giving you that those 2 are not, cause those two are also- those are actually quite intensive exercises-

ST- they are very good, yeah and-

INT- and they also use your mind-

ST- right. Now the thing with tennis, and I used to play tennis 5 times or 6 times a week as well as do tc in the evenings but. It's too hard on my knees. And I find now that I can only play tennis about 3 times a week. It's just too difficult – well or it's just too much pressure on my knees, and if I was to play uh, tennis, say, for 2 hours a day for 3 days I'd be in big trouble.

INT- Ok. So you're trying to keep up the same sort of level of exercise

ST- right yeah

INT- but you're having to do a different kind of exercise

ST- right yeah yeah

INT- ok, that makes sense to me

ST- Kay and and golf, I can't really walk the course for 4 hours, so I usually ride in a cart. So you're not getting, I mean you know, I enjoy it a lot, but it's not like a, a severe workout

INT- Did you use to walk it?

ST- I used to walk it, yeah, and I stopped about 5 years ago.

INT- Oh ok

ST- Well, it's not so much, the walking, like I can walk for 2 hours with my wife, you know, at a fairly slow pace, but, with golf you're standing around a lot and it's the standing that really bothers me as much as the walking. Like, if I was walking steady, I could walk around the golf course, cause it would only take likely an hour, you know what I mean, you can, if you were just doing nothing except walking, and I could likely make it around quite easily. But it's the standing around waiting to shoot, that that gets me. It's the same as shopping. I don't really like to shop for more than about an hour and a half, cause my knees get sore from standing on them. And so, the same is – and tennis is good that way because it only takes a hour and you get warmed up and, [laughs]

INT- Yeah, but it's a higher sort of impact-

ST- Yeah

INT- activity than the others. So this is a way for you to keep up the level of activity-

ST- Yes

INT- That you used to have-

ST- yes

INT- but you're having to split amongst-

ST- yeah

INT- some different activity

ST- yeah, and this also exercises different muscles and gives me more I think, it likely helps my circulation a lot more. Because I'm actually doing exercises in tc that I wouldn't do otherwise, you know, the squats and, all that sort of stuff, you don't normally do that

INT- in the other exercises that you do

ST- yeah, right, yeah

INT- Oh ok. Well it sounds like it's been a very good complement

ST- yes it is yeah, and I think I would like to continue it, actually coming at noon hour has given me a real positive boost, to the whole thing, cause I was finding coming in the evenings a bit of a drag yeah, just too tired.

INT- Right. Any other last thoughts?

ST- Um, I don't think so. I'm likely not as dedicated as you'll find some other people [laughs]

INT- No but it's really good to hear you know, each person's perspective

ST- yeah

INT- and how it is that tc's fitting within their lives

ST- Right yeah

INT- Cause it sounds like tc plays a different role for everybody

ST- Yes I think so, yeah, and I, just as a, I have an interest in health issues, I don't I wasn't in the health field, but I do like to read about, what's good for you and what isn't and I don't always practise everything but[laughs] so you know I think I'm quite familiar with the things that will keep you healthy as compared to the things that won't and I know that at my age I have to exercise, you know on e way or another and I can feel it and I know it from all the research that's been done, that if uh, and uh, you know my wife is a very active person and she's been sick fro 2 months and now she's finding it you know, very very difficult for her to do things that, she could easily do before, and so I think it's just because she hasn't been able to be active for, like 2 months so,

INT- You get kinda rusty

ST- You get kinda rusty yeah. Yeah yeah so um, and I think you can see it in people that you're around that take a casual stroll some people and they're puffing and you think 'well boy they're not,"

INT- they're not too fit

ST- they're not too fit [laughs]

INT- well um, I'll turn the tape off now if you?

ST- Ok, that's fine

INT- OK thank you very much

ST- Ok.

Stan (Participant ID #11)

Transcript #2: Written Responses to Follow-Up Questions

Dec. 12, 2001

Verification of information:

Stan: I don't have any comments on your write-up, it is a very good summary of our conversation. (except I had too many uh's and incomplete sentences or thoughts)

Follow-up Questions for Clarification/Elaboration

You said 'my body feels good...the muscles in the back and the arms and legs feel good' when you practise tai chi. Please describe that feeling in more detail – what do you mean by 'feel good'?

Stan: ... it is difficult to be definitive or very precise in providing details with regard to feeling better; however maybe I can give you examples of improved functions. I notice after several weeks of continuous TC that I can –

Go up and down stairs better
Get in and out of chairs and cars better
Walk for longer periods without sore knees
Less soreness of knees at bedtime and during the nite (sic)
Generally move faster (wife has not noticed much difference)

Can you describe a specific instance when you noticed your balance was better?

Stan: On the question of balance – can get around tennis court faster. (G)enerally better mobility, and when re-starting TC it is much easier to do the one legged kicks (separate foot left and right) after several weeks of training.

Appendix F

Comprehensive Summaries Organized by Participant

Comprehensive Summary: C. (Catherine)

Contextual Info

- 60 yo married Caucasian female (b. Jan29, 1942)
- Born and educated in Canada and France, worked in UK: Retired teacher
- Excellent self-rated health – Osteoporosis diagnosed 1998
- Multicultural exposure in childhood, sees self as 'bridge between east and West'; interested in East Asian culture.

> "... I grew up in a village in BC...where some of my classmates were Japanese Canadian, and there was an integration there – we would sleep over at each other's places and eat at each other's houses and such, go to each other's weddings, and birthdays, and funerals, and...they were Buddhist – my best friend's mother was Buddhist, and at the time it only meant that in that room there was a shrine with oranges and rice cakes or something...and somebody's ashes – but it didn't really have much effect on me, other that the fact that we didn't have that in our house.... so I've always sort of felt that I'm...some kind of a bridge between 2 cultures and that part of my life is merely maintaining the bridge, between East and the West, somehow." [2.1.189-197; 358]

- While in the UK, Catherine studied Buddhist meditation and regarded it as "...probably the biggest thing that shaped me as far as concentration goes." [2.1.138-139]. She still practises on occasion, when she feels stressed:

> "I don't meditate much anymore, but I still have my meditation bench, and...I noticed that when things get tough, on those rare occasions when...I feel challenged, I will head for the meditation bench....Vipassana is what it's called – sitting meditation. I think it's a hugely valuable practice and certainly, in conjunction with tc, it would just be amazing..." [2.1.158-162; Hx: 138-158]

- TC background: First exposed to TC in England at a Thai Buddhist temple 20 years ago. She observed a monk practising Tai Chi, an image that appears to have left a lasting impression on her as she still recalls it vividly. Catherine first tried tc at UofA Extension Centre in the early 80s. She also attended a single session of Taoist Tc, then there was a long break until 1998 when Catherine took up Tai Chi again regularly, this time at the grant McEwan Community College (GMCC). Currently, she does Yang style tc (83 form and tc sword) at the Chinese United Church (CUC with a Cantonese-speaking group. Catherine practices daily: 2x/week at Chinese United Church, then at home daily.
- Other activities: weightlifting, walking, writing, painting. Physical exercise activities all begun in 1998, after osteoporosis dx. Considered self as previously sedentary, prior to retirement [2.1.312; 330, 363]

What Factors are Involved in Initiation of Tai Chi Practice?

- Catherine saw a monk practising TC in England at a Thai Buddhist temple 20 years ago and found it "quite beautiful", and the head monk at the temple told her TC was a good thing to combine with meditation[2.1.172-175; 181-183].
- Catherine had tried TC earlier in life, it was not until close to retirement that she had the time to practise TC and attend the classes regularly [2.1.327-331/329]
- She enjoys finding out about what classes are available in the city, and while looking through the UofA, faculty of Extension catalogue, she found a TC class [2.1.205-209].

This first TC class and other have been held close to where she lives. [2.1.205-209; 2.2.21].

- Catherine started TC expecting something good would come out of doing it [2.1.240-241].
- Shortly before retiring, Catherine discovered she had osteoporosis. Being someone who had always been healthy and who prized health, she was appalled and scared by the diagnosis. She envisioned herself "...with a widow's hump, you know, and a broken bone, and a wheelchair, and nursing home, and I thought, 'Not me!'" So she started a physical activity regime and incorporated TC into that as soon as she retired [2.1.318-327/363,367] Osteoporosis dx increased her fervour for practicing tc and doing other PA [2.3.216-217]

Returning to Tai Chi Practice?

- At the time Catherine began TC again, she was dealing with menopause, other changes in her health, her work, and family responsibilities, and thought that TC might help her through these challenges [2.2.17-20] [overlaps with perceived outcomes]
- While she was working, she had trouble concentrating well enough to do TC properly, and found it humbling to go to class when she had not practised or when she was tired – her inability to keep up resulted in her quitting TC at that time [2.1.67-68; 70-72].

What Factors are Involved in Continuing/

> "...it takes a few months to learn, it takes years to learn it well" [2.3.282-283]
>
> "...you know, I never resent going or say 'I wish I could just skip' or whatever..." [2.3.260-261]

- Catherine says a combination of things keep her practising TC: she suspects that she will benefit from TC, from what she has observed of herself and others such as her TC teachers [2.3.252-256; 256; 259] she enjoys it as an aesthetic experience and feels a sense if belonging in her current group, and she goes to honour her teachers "[2.3.261-266]

> "...[my first teacher] had me convinced that good things would come from this. [My present TC master] is very highly regarded and I just concluded that anyone of his venerable age who could still teach tc and be honoured as the Master must have lots to offer and if its – that's what put him there or helped to keep him physically and mentally alert, until age 89, it must have something for everyone." [2.3.252-256]
>
> "...[my TC master is] a very powerful man, he has such presence...he is the moving force behind that whole group." [2.3.256;259]

- Catherine sees her involvement in TC as a personal gesture of embracing another culture [2.3.122-124/305-307; 2.3.311]
- Initially, Catherine found that skipping classes was "devastating" (because she would never know those moves she missed quite as well as the others), and (because it was embarrassing to forget moves when asked to perform in front of the TC master) [2.1.64; 85-86/356]
- She says since she retired, her energy isn't depleted by the pressures of her work, and TC can be the focus for her week [2.1.109-110].

- She enjoys the continuity of having essentially the same people coming to each class in her current TC group , and that that she is guaranteed to be in good company the days she attends her TC class [2.1.108-109; 2.3.95-96]
- She also finds her present teachers very good and is inspired by them learn TC well enough to be able to practise without assistance [2.2.62-65]
- Catherine also suspects and has heard/read that TC is good for her health, even though she does not understand the mechanism behind it –she believes that her breathing, heart rate, and blood pressure, and her bones will benefit [2.2.183]:

> "...I go through that routine, knowing that some mysterious good is being done for me, and that my respiration and my heart rate and my blood pressure, and maybe even my bones will be improved if I do this every day. " [2.2.92-95]

- Catherine also practises TC simply because she enjoys doing it [2.2.182] or whenever she finds herself in natural surroundings that she finds beautiful:

> "...if there's a beautiful place, I seem to have the need to do the Sword or the need to do tc there, so I found the places along the lake, under the trees, where I can do the Sword, outside, out of the sun, or I guess the mottled sun..." [2.2.342-344]

Related to a Single Instance:

- Catherine said she went to visit her old TC teacher because she wanted to show him that she had continued with TC under the instructor he had recommended [2.3.53-55], she also wanted his feedback, and she enjoyed watching him perform TC [2.3.60-61], and because other students in her current TC class, as well as her current TC master had encouraged her to go [2.3.61-64]

What is the Experience of Tai Chi?

> "...it is beautiful, it's a synchronized...movement performed by a number of people, or one person." [2.3.280-282]

- Catherine sees TC movement as dance-like [2.1.215-216], and described watching her previous TC instructor as "...it's like watching a moving fortress." [2.3.61]. When she is watching the master demonstrating TC, she sees his movements as peaceful and definite [2.2.60-61]
- Catherine sees TC as an activity separate from any religious practise; it's not something you a belief you have to have faith in, you simply practise it [2.1.213-215; 220-223]
- Catherine finds that she needs to focus on them movements as she does them [2.2.130-131], and that some TC sets are more demanding of her concentration than others [2.2.148-150]. She finds she needs to be "mentally and physically in touch with what's going on and where you're supposed to be" while practising TC [2.2.132-134], because if you start thinking about other things you forget where you are in the TC set [2.2.131-132; 134-135].
- If you do forget, and you're with a group, you can continue, but if you're alone when you get lost then you have to start the set all over again. [2.2.131-132; 134-135]
- When she is practising TC, she is not too aware of anyone else in the class, except for her teacher, who she follows. However, she can be distracted by someone entering the room while she is practising, or if they stand close to her [2.2.71-73; 76-78]

- She says TC is a meditative approach to life [2.3.162] and notes how TC and meditation complement one another:

  > "This morning I did tc, and the Sword, and then I went to sit for a bit on the [meditation] bench. And I found an interesting contrast between the 2 procedures – one is so – so physically active and the other is absolutely motionless, and all of the attention focuses inward. It was an interesting contrast. I can see why years ago, the head monk said...tc was a good thing to combine with meditation." [2.3.239-243]

- Catherine finds that at least once during the TC routine, she takes a deep breath, and equates this occurrence with achieving a maximum level of well-being:

  > "...at a certain point in the tc routine, I notice almost inevitably, I take a deep breath – not because I think about it and do it but because it just occurs. And, I know that we as a general rule, we don't breathe deeply enough, but at least in tc you can breathe deeply, profoundly, at least once per session, per round." [2.2.68-71]
  >
  > "...it might be because everything is being aligned and because the circulation is beginning to strengthen and there may be a certain threshold that has arrived at....there is a relief, and the relief is expressed as a sort of a big sigh, a big breath, a sense of well-being, at last you've achieved some maximum level of, of well-being." [2.2.201-203]

- Catherine sees the sword in TC as a 'tool of focus" for self-expression [2.2.163-164]; she experiences a unification of her body and the sword as she practises, a flow similar to what she feels when she writes and paints.

  > "For me...the actual sword itself, the object in my hand, I think is, an advantage, because I have been so much of my life with a pen or a paintbrush in my hand, and often when I'm writing, I don't have a sensation of writing so much as just the flow – I don't know if I can express that so well. The pen is merely a vehicle, and the language is merely a vehicle for what I'm about. You lose the sensation of the clumsy physical act, which – not clumsy – overt....like if you're really painting you forget that your really painting and you're creating an image, you're actually achieving some kind of goal that you set out to do – you forget that this thing in your hand is a tool, but it serves as a focus and the sword, in a way, serves a focus, for me." [2.2.150-158]
  >
  > "With tc the – everything is your own body [demonstrates hand movements and weight shifts in sitting] and your hands become the sword and your mind, eventually, you hope, becomes the sword, you know, one unit, one thing, given to achieving an end." [2.2.164-166] [overlap with perceived outcomes]

- While practising TC Sword with the class, Catherine enjoys the quiet atmosphere and the sun shining in through the window. Sometimes there is Chinese music playing during TC practise and she finds this quite pleasant as well [2.2.51-52; 120-121]

- TC is an aesthetic experience for Catherine, and this experience is enhanced by natural elements, such as the sun shining in through a window, or even doing TC outdoors:

  > "...I like to do Tai Chi outside in natural surroundings, or when the sun's shining through the window – the addition of a natural element can enhance the aesthetic aspect of my art." [2.2.348-350/446]

- Nature and aesthetics are inseparable components of Catherine's spirituality, and she parallels practising TC outdoors to participating in a religious service, where the TC is the service, and the natural environment is the church:

  - "Spiritually, I get a great charge out of just everyday life actually, it's awesome, I mean, sun rising in the morning, shining on the trees – I know it's all scientifically explained but that's pretty spiritual, if by spiritual you mean it gives you great joy." [2.2.298-301]

  > "...I don't know where I might do tc next, but it could quite well be that again on a beach, or on a mountain top so, and just experiencing the movements, which would be I guess, the service of a church, in the environment – in a natural environment." [2.2.355-357]

- She also sees TC as a tool that allows her to transcend everyday struggles and enhance her appreciation for life [overlap with PO]:

  > "...I suppose they [C's art and tc] are all tools to transcendence...anything reasonable that helps us transcend...everyday concerns or struggles or dilemmas, basically is good." [2.2.363-365/453]

  > "...if you turn to it when you're distressed or you turn to it when you're enjoying nature then it's a good instrument, because it helps you transcend or more fully appreciate life. In that respect, I guess it's a religion, although I wouldn't want to say I believe in tc, I practice tc..." [2.2.372-374]

- Catherine noted two negative sensations that have occurred when practising TC: 1) the disagreeable sensation of reduced balance during TC practise if she had consumed alcohol the evening before [2.1.271-272; 2.2.176-177]; 2) she finds it embarrassing when she forgets where she is in the TC moves [2.2.239-241]. When she first practised, she found it unnerving to perform in front of her TC instructor if she did not recall the moves [2.1.103-104; 241-243]
- If she doesn't recall a step during TC practise in class, Catherine finds that she looked around at her classmates to see what to do [2.1.104-106]

Perceived Outcomes

- Catherine found that TC practise, possibly in conjunction with the reduced stress of that came from retiring, improved her concentration and memory, in terms of her ability to recall words, factual information, and mentally visualize a route [2.1.243-246; 2.2.261-266; 267-274; 277-278/423, 428, 431-433]
- Physically, Catherine is aware of some of the benefits of TC written in the literature, but is uncertain how much benefit she is getting from TC alone, as she is doing a number of

things in conjunction with TC, for her osteoporosis (medication, acupuncture, other physical activity) [2.1.307-313].

- Catherine believes that TC practise improves the circulation of energy in her body and this benefits her physically and emotionally:

> "...the chi is the energy that moves around in the body – as I understand it anyway – as you do these forms, as you do these movements, and that this is partly, presumably, what creates good circulation and adequate respiration and an alignment of all of the organs of the body..." [2.3.274-278]

- She elaborated on how TC helped with uncomfortable affective and behavioural symptoms of menopause:

> "I think any regular exercise would help the difficult symptoms – feeling really hot one moment and feeling really cold the next moment, and worrying excessively, uh, mm, crying out of the blue, feeling depressed, all of those things, sleeplessness, I mean, physical activity helps, but tc, because there are these other components of the social and the regular aspect of it – [2.3.88-92]...for someone who's menopausal, it's an offer of routine...and some fellowship...and the physical aspects of it... [2.3.96-98] ...TC I think has a, a leveling, calming effect. Why it helps with menopause, in some cases at least, I mean you can just take it off the top of your head that it's physical activity that's regular [2.3.102-104/299]...but if it helps you to control your urges to eat or your urges to indulge in self-pity or your urges to verbally lash out then it's of enormous value..." [2.3.105-107]

- Catherine feels that she is more verbally assertive since learning the TC sword – that she does not "...withdraw from challenging situations as much as (she used to" but can voice her opinion without being retaliatory [2.3.10-12; 14-19].

> "...doing the Sword from March until now of this year, has made me much more decisive...and a little aggressive, I have to admit – verbally aggressive – now, I don't mind stating my opinion when before, I might have just let things slide, or overlook something that I might find offensive, I'll now voice my offense. Um, probably it's more difficult to live with but it's more honest." [2.1.247-251]

- Now that she's been doing TC, and TC Sword, Catherine also finds herself feeling stronger - being more self-aware, more decisive, and more resolute, than before [2.1.247-248; 298; 2.2.252-253].

> "...doing tc seems to help you make these observations about yourself, seems to make you – seems to help you resolve to do something about it, and it seems to help in the process of keeping the resolution...because it has that advantage, at least, seemingly, of making you be decisive...and strong. And that's a good feeling, feeling strong" [2.1.298-302; 2.1.283-298]
>
> "I think that whatever the discipline involves, it helps you make decision and keep them more solidly than you would if you weren't doing it. " [2.2.252-253]

  - E.g. She noticed that TC heightened her awareness that her balance the next day was compromised if she had consumed any alcohol the evening prior to her TC class, and she found that practising TC helped her give up habits that were compromising her performance [2.1.271-272; 2.2.246-252].

- She believes that she is more self-controlled, both in her speech, as well as in her behaviour and that TC helps her "handle things in a wiser manner" [2.3.25-26; 105-107; 271-274]

> "...it appears to be a slow dance, but it is actually self-defense, but not self-defense in an aggressive way, more in an internal building way, whereby it enables you to – to handle things in a wiser method." [2.3.271-274]

- She believes she now reflects on a situation before reacting to it, that TC helps you learn to consider your actions before carrying them out, and this has improved her ability "to be compassionate with people I find it difficult to be compassionate with" [2.3.31-32] - she sees this also as a similarity between TC and meditation:

> "Well, in retrospect, I would say that before I practised Vipassana or tc...I would react without consideration more often. And, if it's emotionally you're specifically interested in, I believe this is pertinent, because the way you react to a comment or an act, is informed by your emotional response at the time, and so, with Vipassana and with tc, it's a more meditative approach to life and you can consider what it (the aggravating comment or the act) is, sometimes surprisingly to yourself..." [2.3.158-163; 316-317]...the measured response is very important and the reflection on how you act or what you say, is the only way you can learn. If you don't look back on it, you're just going from one instance to another blindly. [2.3.178-181]
>
> "...if you can control your movements you can control your thoughts, and that's, I presume, some spin-off from tc is that you're hopefully not not so inclined to say or do something that is without consideration." [2.2.324-327/439]

- Catherine sees the process of practising TC as both a means to achieving some benefit, as well as an end in itself [2.2.178-183]. For example, Catherine finds that TC is both a process of, and results in, "...a calming and a lining up of thought processes, rather than a jamming [demonstrates with fist and hand] of thought processes whereby you feel like you're getting bombarded by all of the things you have to do, or whatever your concerned about." [2.2.216-219] She mentions this is a quality that TC shares with sitting meditation.
- In this way, she sees TC as a tool that allows her to transcend day to day concerns and lessens emotional pain [2.2.18-20; 136-142; 365]:

> "...I think it's significant that the other day when I felt disappointed that I hadn't built my bones up over the last year, and was concerned that I might have some debilitating disease that was causing this deficiency, that I did tc. Not with any – as I said I don't know if I did all correctly but it seemed to be a way of lessening the pain." [2.2.368-372]

- TC also enhances her appreciation for nature [2.2.374] [overlap with LE]:

> "...I like planting things, like harvesting things...and maybe tc helps me to observe more of it, I get more from it." [2.2.306-307]
> "...I found the places along the lake, under the trees, where I can do the Sword, outside, out of the sun, or I guess the mottled sun, and And, it's a way of seeing what is around you and seeing yourself in relation to that surrounding." [2.2.343-346]

- Catherine believes that TC benefits her in terms of making life more pleasant and improving herself:

> "And the main benefits will be, if you learn it well, and practise it faithfully, I would predict that you will find life more pleasant, and that you will have more to give of quality, and that's the best we can hope for." [2.3.289-291]

- Doing TC sword helps her deal with aggressive feelings she might have [2.2.161-163]

Verification/Confirmation

- 'Assertive' as better term than 'aggressive' [2.3.10-12] and uses 'assertive' after that
- Agrees with statement about need for balance between assertiveness and control, being vocal and being diplomatic [2.3.28-29]
- 'Strong' = in terms of being decisive, resolute, inner strength [2.3.37-46]
- Perceived outcomes of tc are inner strength development and enjoyment of social aspect specific to the CUC group [2.3.76-79; 83-86]
- Practising TC as a bridge between East and Western culture [2.3.120-122]
- Initial exposure to tc [2.3.194]
- Convenience, having time as reasons for starting tc [2.3.195-197]
- Thought "some mysterious good" would come of doing tc [2.3.204]
- Link between practicing tc and meditation to deal with difficulties [2.3.235-237]

Clarification

- 'Control' = self-control, control of the tongue [2.3.25]
- Having more energy to do tc as a reason for starting regular practise [2.3.197]
- Osteoporosis dx increased fervour for practicing tc and doing other PA [2.3.216-217]

Comprehensive Summary: Sally

Background Information (from Bkgd info sheet unless otherwise referenced)

- 62yo married, Caucasian female
- Excellent SR health: HTN, hx of high cholesterol, osteoporosis, recent disc protrusion
- Born and educated in Canada: RN (x40yrs) in Palliative care and rehabilitation, and registered Therapeutic Touch (TT) and Reiki practitioner. Although she considers herself as 'retired', SM integrates nursing and (what she terms) energy healing techniques in private practice, and when working with clients in casual nursing, and volunteer positions on a Palliative Care unit. [4.1.4-15]
- Throughout her years of nursing practise, Sally has been aware of the importance of finding a way to relax and has been on the lookout for relaxation techniques:

  > "I have to say I think in all the years that I've been in professional practice, which is almost 40, I've been aware of the importance of finding a way to relax, and not only for myself, and maybe not even as much for myself, as trying to help other people do that. But in the process of that you're always on the lookout and always aware of techniques that people might write in an article, or do a small book about..." [4.2.143-147]

- Interest in complementary health approaches started following a colleague's inservice on TT in 1987. Completed formal training in TT first, then in Reiki in 1990's, and also attended Bioenergetics classes [4.1.20-37; 222-236]
- She believes that there are many positive things to learn from practices such as TT, Reiki, and tc, that have their basis in ancient civilizations much older than North America [4.1.87-91].
- Although her interest in complementary therapies started in 1987, Sally says she has always carried a personal philosophy concerning looking at health from the perspective of the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual components (that are ever-changing, and sometimes fuzzy because they overlap) that make up a whole person, and she found that TT and Reiki fit in with this concept [4.1.38-56, 136-137; 4.3.40-42, 48-52, 72-89].
- Sally also believes in a concept of energy flow, both within a person's body, and between people in a group. In a group setting, this energy is involved in how people relate and connect to one another [4.1.57-59, 299-344; 4.2.110-116].
- Sally also uses the practices of 'centering' and 'grounding' (learned from her energy healing approaches and tc classes) in her daily life, to stay calm when working with patients or in the face of difficult or stressful situations [4.1.98-117, 382-397; 4.2.154-173]
- TC background: Has practised regularly for 5 years. First exposed to TC at Taoist TC Society (TTCS) demo in 1987. Liking the slowness, the unison of movement, and what she now believes was the energy of the group, she joined the TTCS with her husband. After practising there for 2 years (4hrs/week), she stopped due to family responsibilities and dissatisfaction with professionalism of the instructor [4.3.260-263]. Although the interest in tc was still alive in her and she wanted to return to it, it wasn't until 1996, seven years later, that SM returned to TC, first attending a class at the Edmonton General Hospital (1 hour, 2x/week), then at Edmonton Chinatown Multicultural Association (ECMA), when the EGH class ended [4.1.163-175, 286-288]. Defn of tc: [4.2.326-333]
- Frequency of Practise: Attends tai chi class 11/2 hrs, 1x/week.
- Other physical activities: walking (2-3hrs/wk), swimming (2hrs/wk).

What Factors are Involved in Initiating Tai Chi Practice?

- Although she knew about tai chi, it wasn't until she saw it that she better understood and appreciated it:

> "I think I knew about it (tc). But um, only as a name and as a form of exercise, simple as that. And it wasn't really until I saw it, in action, that I began to understand and have my appreciation for it". [4.1.196-199]

- Sally enjoyed the appearance of Tai Chi, with it's slow pace and movement in unison. She was also drawn to it by the music and by the energy flow that she sensed, coming from the practitioners [4.1.165-174]:

> "...the Taoist tc group over here in Mill Creek was trying to generate membership, and they did tc demonstrations at the fringe....So we would stand and watch them, and they had some music going, and I- partly it was the music I know – but it was also watching these people move in a set together and the – I like the slowness of tc, um, and the moving in unison, and, I'm sure without being able to have identify it in those days, I was again picking up the energy that flowed within that group and out to some of us who were standing there watching. And I said to G__ (husband), 'I'd like to try this' So the 2 of us started to do tc...." [4.2.165-175]

What Factors are Involved in Continuing/Returning to Tai Chi Practice?

- Although she took a 7-year break from tc, Sally missed doing tai chi and always remained interested in tc after her first experience which she had found enjoyable, so returned when she found a class that fit in with her daily routine (being after work, and geographically convenient) [4.1.182-186; 4.3.260-263]
- She sees it as one of a number of physical exercises that she can enjoy [4.1.248,249, 371-378] 4.2.63, 70, 91, 96]. Sally values the tc class as an important part of her week- what draws her back is that she has fun and finds the tone of the group very good; by this she means the camaraderie, helpfulness, and non-judgmental atmosphere of the group as a whole. She finds the leaders are personable; they make the class enjoyable and do not place undue demands on the students [4.1.265-298; 4.2.78-102].
- Sometimes sally has to push herself a bit to go to tai chi, but she knows that what gets her there is the enjoyment and improved SWB she experiences with tc:

> "...I can come to the tc class some days, feeling grouchy, feeling tired, feeling 'oh I've got too much to do, I probably shouldn't be here', or, 'Ugh, I'm not in the frame of mind to do this today, why the heck did I come?', um, but I know what takes me there is that I do enjoy it, and I do come out with that improved sense of well-being. And it takes a little push sometimes, but the benefit is always there. So that's...that's how I would describe it. [4.2.60-73]

What is the Experience of Tai Chi?

- When practising tai chi, either alone or with a group, Sally enjoys the rhythm and flow of performing the movements and moving in unison, and she senses an energy flow within her body and around her body in relation to other practitioners [4.2.182-212; 4.3.156-159]:

> "...I think there is a sense of rhythm to your body, as you're doing tc because it is a set of movements and one movement flows into another so there's a

> sense of flow and a sense of rhythm, I think that I, I like very much, and certainly can feel..." [4.2.15-18]

- As she practises tai chi, she concentrates on what move comes next and is very aware of her body mechanics, and at the same time Sally experiences a sense of detachment that she describes as the ability to temporarily put aside thoughts or concerns that are in her mind prior to practising [4.2.24-52; 4.3.195-207]:

> "...as you move through a set and you, you um begin to associate with that that rhythm and that flow, I find I can also, I can do 2 things: I'm concentrating on what I'm doing....Um, but with that comes some sense of detachment...I hesitate to use the word 'meditation' because I think that takes you into a a different space somehow, but I do think that there is, with the concentration comes a detachment from the, uh, well the immediate environment, not necessarily the group, because you are part of the energy of the group, um, and maybe it's a detachment from other things that might have been crowding your mind before you got to the tc class, such as 'I must remember to go to Safeway on my way home and buy milk', to, one of your kids who, with whom you had a conversation on the phone and you know is struggling with something or other, and you're carrying that kind of problem issue around in your head, so that that the detachment,, I think, puts those things aside for awhile, and allows you just to stay with the tc, both in physical and mental state, and then I guess you'd say, a spiritual state, because I think that's what that detachment is, is sort of – you've got the the body-mind-spirit kind of component with that." [4.2.24-42]

- Sally finds that she 'moves into a meditative space' sometimes while practising a tai chi she knows well [4.3.161-165]:

> "S- I can do uh the Simple set um, and just – I lose the room. I just do it and it feels quite lovely." [4.3.171-172]
>
> S- Now, the goal is to get to this wonderful spot, with everything that you know, so that you can just move with the set and forget the room as I said, you know, that, that would be great [laughs]
> INT- Ok. You said 'lose the room'
> S- Well, a moment ago I said, um, 'move into that meditative space'. So that's what I mean. Um, you are and you aren't in the room, you know, I – we, within the first interview I talked about being part of the rhythm of the group and the energy that flows with the group. And, certainly, that's part of what I'm talking about, that that feeling of you're all doing the same thing at the same time, you know, everything that goes with that. But at the same time there's no need for you to say to yourself, 'now what do I do next?' You know what to do next, the movements just come, with some nice even flow to them and you know what you're doing. So you can be, certainly be aware of the group that you're working with, but you can also be in some kind of um meditative space, or perhaps another way to say it is some sort of spiritual space, you can in some way allow that part of your being to be nourished by the tc [4.3.176-190].

- Although detached from her thoughts, Sally says she stays 'in touch' with the 'real world' (ie. is aware of the time, and people around her), while she is practising tai chi [4.2.227-233; 239]
- As she performs the closing movement sequence at the end of a tai chi set, Sally experiences a sense of peace and comfort, a 'lovely quiet moment' that she compares to 'being wrapped up in a nice warm blanket'

> "INT- ...can you talk a little bit about how you see...tc fits with....the spiritual aspects of a person?...
> S- ...I think it's part of feeling centered, feeling at peace, more so than when I began to do the tc set. I feel it mostly at the conclusion of the tc set, when you bring yourself back to the neutral position [demonstrates]- and as you and I know, there's some – with each of the sets that we learn, you bring your hands in, sometimes you cross them and then bring them out, and down, or you bring them in like this and turn them over and then straighten your arms out so that they're at shoulder level and then you bring them down to your side. There's...a wonderful..settled feeling, or peaceful feeling, that you can let yourself have, as you start to slowly bring your hands down from eye level or shoulder level, and bring them down slowly until they're resting at the sides of your body....and, for me, what I feel, is that internal sense of bringing in something peaceful – we ca n call it something spiritual – peaceful's a better word I think, because again it has a settled feeling for my physical body, but it also has a component of...feeling quiet, no chatter, the chatter is gone, you know, so that you can just be in your own centre, and to me that's far more than physical, you're really paying attention to the inner self. So that's the spiritual piece of that, you know." [4.1.140-141, 145-159]

> "...if I'm on my own in the basement – you know, if I were better disciplined about this I could do tc in the Rec. room every morning, and boy would I benefit from that! [laughs] I'm just too lazy to go down there and do it! [laughs] But I know on the occasions that I have...um, the sense of just having a more even balance of energy within my body is there, the centeredness that I talked about, the grounded feeling is there, um, a sense of peace, a sense of well-being. We finish the set and you bring your hands down to the side and it's a lovely, quiet moment. You know you're going to start off and do whatever else you have to do for the rest of the day, but um, and another way to describe it is as though you're wrapped up in a nice warm blanket, just for a moment before you throw it off and go on with your day, you know [laughs], but that's, those are all images I guess of saying, that's what I mean by flow of energy, you know, yeah." [4.2.212-222]

> "...and I have the same sensation when I um, when I'm doing the set with the group and that is that there's a cloaking or a warm comfortable feeling when you finish the set – just, just those few seconds of 'oh, isn't this great, this is soo peaceful'. And it doesn't last particularly, because you move on and do whatever, but, but that certainly is there." [4.2.235-238]

- She says tai chi is a process of grounding and enhances the feeling of being grounded and centred [4.3.25-308, 313-315]

Perceived Outcomes

- Sally sees doing Tai Chi as a physical exercise and meditative-type activity that promotes physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being, and that you need to try it in order to see the benefit.
- Physically, he finds tc helpful for improving her overall physical fitness - muscle tone, general endurance for climbing stairs, and hiking, as well as improving her blood circulation:

> "You need to try it in order to see that benefit, but' I would put some emphasis on the fact that you do benefit from it, physically, and mentally and emotionally. Um, and I'd say 'I notice benefit in my muscles, I notice benefit in my circulation, I notice benefit in my tolerance for climbing stairs and other uh graded – like a mountain, and I just feel better after I've done the set." [4.2.329-333]
>
> S- Well I think my physical fitness is improved. And I noticed this years ago before I was doing this style of tc I was doing the Taoist tc, surprised myself one day by being able to walk up all the wooden stairs from the parking lot on – beside Grierson Hill to the conference centre, the Shaw Conference centre, and that's quite a hike
> INT- That's a long way
> S- And I just went boomdittyboomdittyboom and no problem at all. So that's certainly one – I fit the tc into part of my fitness and I know that it has improved my fitness and continues to do that [4.3.17-25]

- Sally reports that tc has had physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual benefits for her, and that these effects are not clearly separable from one another:

> "There's a flow of energy associated with doing tc too...they are teaching you a set that allows for physical and spiritual well-being....I think that the idea of an energy flow within the body, an energy flow around the body, fits with the way you do the movements of tc, and how you...allow yourself, when you know the set well, to, not necessarily be totally with the physical, but you can go inside and be – and do some of the meditative stuff that goes with that as well." [4.1.63; 66-7; 69-74]
>
> But it isn't purely a physical thing. And, when you have um, been doing tc for an hour, say, and - being with the group is important too – but let's just talk about me as an individual. After an hour's worth of tc, I know that I feel more centered, I know that everything feels more relaxed, I know that my eyes feel brighter. Well, that isn't entirely physical, there's a mental-emotional-spiritual component to that as well. Um, when you're working with a group and doing tc sets in the group, and – I'm talking about a group that has learned a full set and is doing it well and feeling comfortable with it – you can also feel that interchange of energy within the group that are doing the set together. Well, that's not physical, there's something more to that, and I've used this mental-emotional-spiritual – I've used that term a lot, but I think there's a mind-body-spirit um, component to tc and you can feel that in the group, when you're working in a group." [4.1.76-86]

- TC has contributed to strengthening her connection with her spiritual self and has been a facilitator for broadening her view of spirituality [4.3.29-31, 93-128, 35-40]:

> "And then I think I feel some strengthening of connection with my spiritual self, and I know that one does this in a variety of ways, but I think the tc has provided one component of that." [4.3.29-31]

- Sally sees tc as a peaceful, quieting experience that leaves her feeling centered and 'put together well' and at the same time energized, once she is done [4.1.99-117, 140-159 2117-226]:

> "I think in energy work, that's what you're trying to achieve, is comfort, you know, you don't want to be jangled, you want to feel, put together well, when your finished. Tc does that". [4.2.224-226]

- She says that her 'eyes feel brighter' after doing tai chi, that the foggy feeling she may have in her eyes is reduced. She attributes this to improved circulation, feeling less burdened by her problems, and increased alertness [4.1.95-137].
- TC has helped Sally to raise emotional pain that she was holding, and allowed her to gain insight into issues in her life [4.1.202-219, 238-241; 4.2.280-294].
- She finds that doing tai chi improves her mood, sense of well-being, and spiritual well-being [4.2.49,50, 52-58, 63, 77, 127]:

> "...when you're doing a whole set, um...That's when I take away, that's what gives me some sense of um, rejuvenation, sense of well-being is improved, you know in my work with palliative care we like to know what the individual's sense of well-being is so we say 'SWB' and stick this on the chart, you know....So my SWB goes up [laughs] – it's, it's better. On a zero to ten scale, zero being the best, it's probably at zero, rather than being somewhere further along that line, you know." [4.2.49,50, 52-58]
>
> "But then let's go a little bit deeper and talk about mental health and spiritual well-being, and in terms of energy flow in the body, the tc has that benefit also of just, um, improving your ability to put thoughts together, improve – I use the word 'sense of well-being' which has a very – that's an umbrella term, you know. So I think that embodies the mind, emotion – the mind, the emotions, and the spiritual component of the person. And um, the tc movements, the rhythmic – the rhythm, the flow, the energy generated by that, I think is what benefits these inner things for the individual.
> INT- And that – are you talking about for you, as an individual?
> S- Yes. I kept that very third person, but yeah, for me, indeed". [4.2.124-132]

- Practising gives her a break from the 'chatter' of thoughts in her mind; it allows her to put aside things in her mind and she finds her problems feel less burdensome after doing tai chi:

> "INT- How about things that go through your head at the time – you mentioned that sometimes you come in with, with a lot going on /S-and the jangle of the world, eh?...

S- Um, I can come in with a number of things on my mind, depending on the day, and I know that I'm, I'm thinking about them when I first start off. But I do find, that over, say, even that, even the first half of the 2 hours, you know where we're doing the practising and so on...I let go of those fairly quickly. I think that's a good thing. And I'm just there, you know, the time capsule sort of thing 'this is this 2 hours and this is what we will do for this 2 hours and I know I'm gonna feel good when I leave, and those other issues are there but they'll just have to wait'. So I do some of that as well.
INT- Just sort of putting things aside /S-putting things aside, yeah [4.2.245-246; 262-269]...And then of course, we just get socializing a little bit, and that helps to distract you from what baggage you might have brought in [laughs]".[2.4.272-274]

- She also feels more self-confident [4.2.180-181; 4.3.28-29; 362-365]
- TC has contributed to Sally's holistic view of health:

INT- Right, ok. [pauses] You had said that um tc has in some way, has been a contributor towards this growth of um, a more holistic view maybe that you've had. Have you been able to – can you tell me what it is about tc for you that has shed some light on this for you? Is there something specific?

S- No, it's not something that you could spell out in a concrete specific fashion [pause]. I used the word 'openness' a moment ago. It's opened me to look at the whole person and the various ways in which we try to remain balanced and healthy. I think that's that's the best way to say it. It's not something I can put in a box at all, you know. [4.3.53-60]

Comprehensive Summary: Ben

Background Information

- 55 yo married, Caucasian male (b. Mar 17, 1946)
- Good SR health: Hyperthyroidism and HTN, other history of musculoskeletal conditions (sciatica, tennis elbow) [6.1.138; 198; 202-204]
- Born in Germany, and educated in Canada: Vocational training: Process operator in a coin minting facility
- Ben finds that it's easy for him to use visualization to relax – he says he has been a "daydreamer" ever since he was a child, and this comes into play in the tc as well [6.1.162-166; 246-259]

> "...I've been told I'm uh, like a daydreamer. See I can put myself in a special, special situation, if I'm stressed out or something, and I can think of the beach and water and I can actually hear the water, I can smell the water, and I can visualize very good, see. That's, so whenever I do tc, visualization for me to relax, comes naturally." [6.1.162-166]

- Tai Chi background: Began tc, with his wife, 4 1/2 years ago and has continued with the same group ever since, doing "Old People's Kung Fu", which is how he laughingly describes tai chi [6.1.294-304].
- Frequency of practise: In his first 1 1/2 to 2 years in tc, Ben practised daily for 15 minutes or more. He did this in order to learn the basic moves of the tc sets, and so he would not fall behind and feel anxious in the class when asked to perform the tc movements [6.1.5-51]. He attended the class consistently - in the initial stages, Ben even made arrangements in order to accommodate the tc when it overlapped with his Sunday shift work [6.1.56-61]. Once he had learned the basic steps, he tapered off practising, but continues to attend the tc class for 2 hours, once per week, as his shift work allows [6.1.37-42, 46-55], and also practises short sections of tc and kung fu during his work breaks [6.fieldnote1.5-6; 6.2.23-25].
- Other leisure/physical activities: Ben reports that prior to tc, except for walking (1 hour daily) he was not doing any other exercise, Since starting tc, he seldom goes for walks [6.2.27-30] and that he is not currently engaged in any other leisure or physical activities.

What Factors are Involved in Initiating Tai Chi Practice?

- He and his wife were relatively sedentary and he thought they should get involved in some form of physical activity in addition to walking. He 'didn't care for' high impact exercises such as jogging or running. Ben was more interested in some form of slow martial art that was not as strenuous as kung fu, which attracted him but he felt it would be too hard on older adults. Ben had always been interested in taking martial arts and had heard of tai chi, and was already thinking along those lines when his wife's doctor recommended that she take Tai Chi [6.1.70-83].
- An advertisement for the Edmonton Chinatown Multi-Cultural Association's Tai Chi class in his community newspaper caught his eye, and he thought the class fee was reasonable, so he and his wife registered for tai chi classes [6.1.85-89].

What Factors are Involved in Continuing/Returning to Tai Chi Practice?

- Initially, one of the factors that kept Ben practising tai chi was his enthusiasm for learning the tai chi moves [6.1.6-7]. He found it much easier and more beneficial to attend class regularly and practise daily, even immediately, following the class, because not practising would result in him forgetting the steps, losing his concentration, and feeling "anxious and excited." He felt that not practising would be much more work as he would fall behind and get discouraged [6.1.7-36, 62-65].

- Ben also values tai chi for exercise; it is their main form of physical activity [6.1.274-279]. But besides the exercise value, Ben sees himself continuing with tai chi simply because he finds it an interesting, enjoyable, and fun activity he likes practising the movements and they relax him and make him feel good [6.1.62, 279-281, 103-114, 307-308; 6.2.12-16]:

> "...I don't think we'd ever quit. The bottom line is we wouldn't quit, you know. As much as we've learned the steps and we know them back and forwards and that, I like doin' them. It's, it's not just for the exercise, it's just for doin' it." [6.1.290-293]

- Another factor in continuing tai chi for Ben was that he liked the class right from the start [6.1.89-92]. He had some initial concerns about the language of instruction, whether they would get individual assistance to learn the moves, and whether he and his wife would fit in with the group as they represented an ethnic minority, but these concerns were quickly allayed as they got to know people in the class, who he found 'very nice' and 'very willing to help you out'[6.1.93-96; Fieldnote 1.8-13]
- Ben and his wife have gotten to know people in the tai chi group; he enjoys attending annual social functions with the tai chi group and has a fun in the class 6.1.103-106, 277, 309-310]
- At one point, Ben considered quitting Tai Chi, because he felt it was becoming repetitious for him once he was familiar with the tai chi forms. However, his wife told him not to quit, so he remained, then the instructor began teaching other tai chi forms that were new to him, including some Kung Fu, which he had always wanted to learn. As well, Ben found that continuing with tai chi allowed him to refresh his memory regarding previously learned tai chi forms, as tended to mix up some moves between the 3 different tai chi sets he had learned [6.1.282-290; 6.1.32-37].

What is the Experience of Tai Chi?

- When Ben initially started practising Tai Chi, he found he would get a little tense as he tried to learn the moves, but this feeling faded as he became more familiar with the routine:

> "When I was first taking tc, I was a little more uh tense on learning the moves, ok, that was always in the back of my mind I wasn't totally relaxed at first eh. But I mean that goes with anything eh. If you start any practise of any kind eh, it's just like a new job eh. Once you get into the routine, that thing fades and it turns out smelling like roses eh. But at first for me it was a little on the tenseful side, eh, learning the moves, doing good and that." [6.1.227-232]

- Ben sees listening to accompanying music as going 'hand in hand' with practising tai chi. While he finds tai chi relaxing on its own, he feels that music enhances that relaxed mood. He finds the tai chi music both relaxing and stimulating; it blends with the tai chi moves, soothes tension and 'takes your mind off a few things' [6.1.97-103, 116-121, 124-129].

> "... to be honest with you they went hand in hand, the music and the moves went hand in hand, you know. If you were to do – like I find if I do tc without music it's not as relaxing – I mean it's relaxing enough but, but the music in the background eh, it uh, it sends you to a more relaxing kind of mood" [6.1.126-129]

- When Ben practises Tai Chi his thoughts are initially on "getting ready" to begin the tai chi set [6.1.133-134]:

> "Just before I start or begin to do tai chi, I try to loosen up physically and mentally. Physically – I do the warm-ups. Mentally I isolate myself from the surrounding area – examples – sight and sound, then I picture myself on. Refresh in my mind the beginning of each move. [6.2.3-10]

- Once he begins the tai chi moves, he completely relaxes, doesn't think of anything, not even the moves because they come automatically for him. He says everything around him 'disappears' and he experiences a sense of timelessness [6.1.133-136, 146-160, 184-189]. While doing tai chi, Ben daydreams about natural scenes such as being at a mountain stream, or in the desert. He experiences these environments with all his senses, feeling the sand of the desert between his toes while he's moving through the tai chi form [6.1.162, 166-179]:

> "I like mountains I like trees I like streams. And I can visualize the stream with the leaves falling into it, the smell of fall, you know, dead leaves if that, particular thing. And uh, that's one example, Kay, so, and another one would be, desert. I can feel the heat, I can feel the sand in my toes eh, when I'm doin' these moves." [7.1.176-179]

- His body "feels good" while doing tai chi:

> "The rhythmic motion of the moves, makes me feel at ease and soothes my body and mind. I feel like on a cloud and my body responds" [6.2.12-16]

- When he has finished the tai chi form, he comes back to reality, as if he's waking up 6.1.157-160]. Occasionally, Ben becomes so completely engrossed in these visions that he loses his place in the tai chi form [6.1.179-183].

Perceived Outcomes

- Ben says that he feels tai chi helps 'mind and body'. Simply going through the tai chi motions feels good physically [6.2.12-16]
- Ben has also noticed that practising tai chi alleviated aches and pains in his elbow and back – for example, he had pain and stiffness from tennis elbow and after practising tai chi, he "felt 100% better" and has not had any further discomfort in his elbow since [6.1.136-146, 202-211]. Ben also had sciatica that made it difficult to do tai chi, however "...somehow or another I practised enough a little bit that I guess it worked itself loose" [6.1.199]
- Emotionally, Ben finds practising tai chi helps him relax when he is tense. If he is worried about something, or has lots on his mind (e.g. family troubles), totally dedicating his mind to tai chi practise helps him forget those problems, they 'seem to disappear' [6.1.193-196, 213-215; 6.2.18-21].

> "Tai Chi for me is very relaxing, therefore it rids my body of the daily grind and troubles of the day" [6.1.18-21]

- As well, Ben feels he has become a less tense person who is more stress resistant since he started practising tai chi:

> "...before I even took it (tc) you know, I was always tense, never relaxed, eh. Always go go go, mad rush here there all over, you know, always just highballin' it. And then once we start taking tc, uh, that feeling kinda slowly, slowly would be the word, yeah, it slowly fade away....and as for general things that go around me, like troubles and that, like we're having now in the world, they have that won't even fizz on me when I'm doing this eh" [6.1.219-222; 234-236]

Comprehensive Summary: Shirley

Background Information

- 53 yo married, Caucasian female (b. Sept 13, 1948)
- Born and educated in Canada: Completed Grade 12, worked as homemaker, and recently began working as a product demonstrator
- Good SR health: osteoarthritis – neck, lower back, knees, ankles [7.1.28-35]
- Shirley described herself as previously being "a very nervous, shy person" [7.1.52] who had repeated depressive episodes that were treated with long term medication use. She eventually decided to discontinue medication due to concerns about dependency reducing her quality of life [7.1.52-61; 180]. She continued to experience occasional depressive episodes with anxiety, so restarted some medication. She also attended a stress management class that she found non-beneficial as she felt uncomfortable discussing her problems in a group setting and could not concentrate on the visualization exercises. [7.1.61-75; 219-223]]
- TC background: Began tc, with her husband, 4 1/2 years ago, after her doctor recommended it to her for stress and anxiety reduction, and depression. [7.1.72-74; 295-296] Shirley's husband registered them both for Tai Chi classes at the Edmonton Chinatown Multicultural Association (ECMCA) in March 1997 and she has continued at the same location ever since. Shirley has learned 3 patterns in the Tchao or Tang Long (Praying Mantis) style of Tai Chi: Simple Tai Chi, Moving Hands, and Pushing Hands. She also does TC at public performances throughout the year, and assists in teaching TC
- Shirley says that until recently, she never thought of tc as an exercise – it was always something to do for her stress and depression, but now she sees it as a low-impact exercise [7.1.167-172; 291-297]
- Frequency of practise: Presently, Shirley attends the tc class for 2 hours, once per week. Initially, Shirley practised with her husband daily for 15 minutes or more.
- Other physical activities: walking 15 minutes, 5 times/week [7.2.24]

What Factors are Involved in InitiatingTai Chi Practice?

- Shirley had never heard of Tai Chi until her doctor recommended that she try Tai Chi 'for (her) nerves" rather than prescribing further medication for her depression [7.1.72-74, 295-296].
- Her husband followed up on the doctor's recommendation and registered Shirley and himself for Tai Chi classes at ECMCA [7.1.74-82].

What Factors are Involved in Continuing/Returning to Tai Chi Practice?

- Shirley says she would never have kept on going to Tai Chi without the support and encouragement of her husband. She says he was her 'pillar'- they attended weekly classes together and he 'pushed' her to practise tai chi daily with him. Ben would cue her when she couldn't remember the next move, and he got the accompanying music and videotape of the tai chi patterns from assistants in the Tai chi class [7.1.84-91, 93-99, 224-238]
- After 3 or 4 months, Shirley got used to practising Tai Chi and attending the classes. Now she enjoys Tai Chi and says it's lots of fun [7.1.164-168, 318-321, 323]. She doesn't mind repeating the movements and patterns over and over [7.1.239]. She likes the people in the group – she and her husband have made many friends there. She enjoys socializing with the people during tea break and at banquets or other events during the year [7.1.244-254, 323]. Shirley now likes tai Chi so much, "...(when my husband) said he wanted to quit and I said 'no we're still going to go cause I enjoy doing it" [7.1.242-243]
- Until recently, Shirley never thought of Tai Chi as exercise until a health professional told her it was. [REF] Now that she knows it is physical exercise, Shirley wants to

continue Tai Chi as a form of exercise for her and her husband (as they do not engage in much other leisure time physical activity) [7.1.243]

- Although Shirley says that she knows daily Tai Chi practise would reduce soreness in her knees, she finds that daily chores, family life, and work distract her from regular practise [7.2.2-4]

What is the Experience of Tai Chi?

- When she's doing Tai Chi, either in class or at performances, Shirley doesn't think about problems or people around her, she just concentrates on the tai chi moves. Her mother watched Shirley at a Tai Chi performance and remarked that she had never seen Shirley so relaxed as she looked while doing Tai Chi. While practising tai chi at home, Shirley relaxes, occasionally so much so that she forgets her next move. When she does forget a move during the tai chi class, however, Shirley has to look around to see what to do next, and this makes her feel nervous [7.1.133-163, 178].

> "...Once I get into the routine, I can relax, and there were times I have done it at home, and the music is on, and I'm doing it I have gotten halfway maybe through Moving Hands, I got so relaxed I forgot my next step....I had to stop and think 'what do I do' – that's how...relaxed I was" [7.1.152-156]

- Shirley says that music plays an essential role in her enjoyment of practising Tai Chi. She finds the accompanying music very relaxing and peaceful for her mind and body; it improves her ability to concentrate on the tai chi steps, and helps her to forget about things going on around her [7.1.100-121]. Sometimes she'll even just listen to the music without doing the Tai Chi moves [7.2.17-20]

> "Doing it (tc) without music it's horrible, I don't like it- I have to have that music there, it is so relaxing....I can't concentrate that much when there's no music. When there's music it makes me very peaceful inside and I, just forget about everything....When there isn't music, I'm thinking about things, going on around me, and then I'm not concentrating on my steps" [7.1.101-102;111;113-114]

Perceived Outcomes

- Shirley became involved in Tai Chi to reduce her stress and depression, and she feels that Tai Chi has helped both of these. She says the Number 1 benefit of tai chi for her is that she feels less stressed, and tai chi helps her not to think about problems around her. Although she still feels depressed at times, she is no longer dependent on medication to manage her mood [7.1.174-185, 328; 9.2.13-15]

> "(When I was depressed) I couldn't face the day, I would prefer to stay in bed under the covers and feel safe. I would feel sad and lonely most of the time. Tai Chi has helped me to relax and come out of my shell" [7.2.9-11]

- She says that doing tai chi has helped her become a less nervous person and has made her feel more comfortable speaking in public. She also feels that repeatedly performing Tai Chi in public has built up her self-confidence [7.1.124-132, 172-174]
- Shirley finds that she can concentrate on doing tai chi whereas she was unable to concentrate on other stress management techniques such as visualization that she has tried in the past [7.1.215-219].

- Physically, Shirley finds practising tai chi helpful to reduce arthritic pain in her knees and back. If she hasn't done tai chi for a while, her joints are sore and she cannot bend down very far, but as she continues to practise, she notices a gradual improvement in her symptoms (pain and stiffness and flexibility. Shirley believes that faithfully engaging in daily tai chi practise is helpful for reducing the aches in her knees, and that continued tai chi practise may strengthen her bones enough to prevent her from requiring knee surgery [7.1.38, 43-46, 197-203, 211-214, 205-210, 328-330].

Comprehensive Summary Cathy

Background Information
(from bkgd info sheet or Cathy's edited copy of summary #1, unless otherwise referenced)

- 80 yo married, Caucasian female (b. Apr 7, 1921)
- Good Self-Rated health: Osteoarthritis, Rheumatoid arthritis, history of other health conditions requiring multiple medications - diverticulitis, respiratory problems, Raynaud's, stomach ulcers from RA medication, back surgery, chronic fatigue syndrome [8.1.3-5, 29-34]
- Born and educated in Holland: Nursed in Holland and Indonesia then worked in Canada as an aide at an auxilliary hospital. Completed nursing aide course, then an O.R. course at the U of A and worked in a hospital operating room.
- Cathy has always been active, walking, cycling, cross-country skiing. However, 10 years ago she had back surgery and her arthritis became severe enough that she gave up all exercise except walking. However, she found that walking by itself was not enough physical activity for her [8.1.2-8].
- Cathy has been doing Tai Chi with the TTCS for almost 8 years now and she progressed to instructing Tai Chi in May 1995. Cathy does meditation and chanting at the Taoist temple connected with the TTCS, practises that she does not feel conflict between her Catholic religious beliefs [8.2.252-256]. Cathy perceives that Taoism is not a religion, and the practise of bowing to various figures is merely a symbol of respect [8.1.300-316]. She says she does not currently have the time for other leisure activities, as tai chi and other educational and community activities related to the TTCS in the city and out of town consume her week.
- Cathy has learned the 108 move tai chi set, as well as the sword and sabre sets, and Lok Hup, a 66-movement form (the first part of which she also teaches)[8.1.105]
- Frequency of practise: Cathy practises 6 days a week from 3 1/2 to 6 hours (including 71/2-10 hours of instruction time per week. She practises at home 20 mins every morning, 11/2 hours before classes begin, and stays after class to practise as well. [8.2.35-38, 41-53]
- Cathy defines Tai Chi as"

> "Tai Chi is a series of...slow-moving exercises. (It) can be done by anyone, regardless of age or physical condition, you can do it in a wheelchair you can sitting down, you can do it standing up. There's no ... limits for anyone, anyone can learn it. And it has tremendous health benefits for everyone who really wants to try it." [8.1.521-525]

- Cathy does not see herself as an exception when it comes to experiencing health benefits from tc, however, she does link benefits with long term, dedicated practise [8.1.207-214, 142-143].

- She strongly believes in older people's abilities:

> "...sometimes people will say about older people 'oh older people can't do this and that', and, I'm a wrong – usually someone say 'you talking to the wrong people' [laughs] I will say 'no, no don't bring age as a um, as a you know', I mean you can, some people when they are 55 they think that they're old, right, and they say 'I can't do this anymore' and 'I can't do that anymore' and by the time they're 70 they can't do anything anymore because

> they've told themself over and over that they can't do it, they can't do that." [8.1.537-543]

What Factors are Involved in Initiating Tai Chi Practice?

- Cathy was interested in becoming more physically active, since she had given up her other exercise activities [8.1.7-8]
- Eight years ago, in January 1994, Cathy's son encouraged her to try Tai Chi [8.1.8-10]. Cathy had previously heard about Tai Chi and seen ads in the newspaper, but classes were held at night, in a location that was inconvenient for her, so she did not register [8.1.52-55].
- A month after her son had called her, a tai chi class was offered at a convenient location for her, 5 minutes from her home [8.1.55-61].

What Factors are Involved in Continuing/Returning to Tai Chi Practice?

- Cathy registered for a Tai Chi class in her neighbourhood in January 1994, and "got really hooked" [8.1.8-11, 58]. She became a member of the Taoist Tai Chi Society (TTCS), registered for additional classes and attended many of the Society's workshops across Canada, because the more she did Tai Chi, the better she felt [8.1.24-25, 85-86].
- Cathy clearly remembers her first experience with Tai Chi:

> "I bravely went out there by myself and I was the oldest in the class, and I felt really stupid, cause I thought well all these people were younger, and I always thought they knew what they were doing, and I never knew when I got home 5 minutes later I didn't remember what we had done." [8.1.72-75]

- Her instructor's encouragement kept her going [8.2.72-78, 82-83] and in spite of her first experience, she says she "got hooked (on) Tai Chi from the beginning"

> "I remember that I said to my instructor one time, I said 'I'm too old I'm never going to learn this' and he said, 'Ah don't be silly the other's just pretend that they know something' [laughs]. And I'm the only one that's still doing it, the only one that became an instructor and none of the others continued" [8.1.75-78]

- Cathy also found that she noticed benefits to her health after the first month of doing Tai Chi, and the more Tai Chi she did, the better she felt. So once she started feeling better, she "wasn't going to let (tai chi) go" [8.1.13-16, 24-25, 84-86]
- The founder of the Taoist Tai Chi Society, Master Moy Lin Chin also had a profound impact on her, early on in her Tai Chi practise, and throughout her involvement with TTCS:

> "...Master Moy, has helped me right from the very first time, every time I went to a workshop he would give me encouragement he would give me corrections, he would personally come over and, you know, pull my hand in a certain way or push my leg or whatever, and um, so I'm forever grateful for him. I'm sorry that he has left us, but I promise that I will keep working hard and try to, to keep his memory alive." [8.1.92-97]

- Cathy says that Tai Chi never gets boring for her because she loves practising and instructing:

> "...I love what I'm doing an I told my family I said 'if I drop dead doing it then you know I die doing something that I really love'" [8.1.511-513]

- She also believes that even though you've learned tai chi, you still have to refine it. She says her tai chi is good and she has a good understanding of the moves but is not yet a real expert [8.2.229-231] so engages in ongoing tai chi learning opportunities, through reading and workshops [8.2.232-236, 249-254]

> "...even so you learn it (tc) and you say 'yes I know it' you have to go and refine it if you will, that's maybe the best word." [8.2.252-254]

What is the Experience of Tai Chi?

- Cathy says that when practising Tai Chi, she feels "very quiet inside" and "at peace with the world" [8.1.131-132, 347].
- She terms Tai Chi as "meditation in motion" because of the calm, peaceful state you try to achieve when practising [8.1.143-144, 344-351]. She says she has developed a 'Tai Chi Eye' - she uses her peripheral vision to be aware of other people's movements around her so that she moves in unison with the group that Cathy finds actually helps her meditation work [8.1.352-372]. As she practises, she sometimes thinks of Master Moy, but otherwise does not really think of anything except visualizing her next move [8.1.162-166, 348]. Cathy is not distracted by thoughts of other tasks she has to do, nor by other activity outside the Tai Chi classroom [8.2.149-154; 176-183, 348-351].
- Over the last 3 years of frequent, regular practise, she has become more aware of internal movements of her body as she practises. She feels her spine stretching and turning as she practises [8.1.133-135, 142-143, 172-173]; she can also elicit this sensation in her spine when moving other body parts (e.g. when moving her hand and forearm). Cathy also feels her internal organs moving inside her body, being massaged as she performs the Tai Chi movements [8.1.135]. Cathy believes that while these internal activities likely normally occur in Tai Chi, her awareness of the sensations are the product of regular, concentrated Tai Chi practise.
- When she practises tai chi alone, Cathy can concentrate solely on what she is doing. She can be totally relaxed and feel even more than when she is with a group, where she has to concentrate on staying together with the group [8.2.56-72].
- When the group does tai chi together, it is more peaceful, the movements are more gentle and relaxed, she can feel her internal organs and chi moving, more so than if everyone is moving differently or at their own pace [8.2.104-117].
- Cathy sees learning tai chi as a staged process and you focus on different aspects of your body as you progress through each stage. She says that when people begin tai chi, the concentration is on the external body – large muscle groups and bones, and there is no internal movement. Beginners depend on the group setting in order to learn the set, and the emphasis is on learning the moves. Once you remember the moves then you refine them, then start to relax while doing them. The next stage involves visualization to shift your weight to specific areas of your body. Then gradually, you start to work on internal aspects of your body, such as feeling spinal rotation, and internal organs being massaged while you practise tai chi [8.2.127-129, 140-191]. She says the more experienced you become, the more you feel internally, and that some tai chi concepts/sensations cannot be understood until you experience them personally [8.2.197-203].

Perceived Outcomes

- Cathy feels that Tai Chi has changed her completely

> "...it (tc) has helped me so much physically, spiritually if you want, mentally, emotionally, whatever way you want to put it." [8.1.514-515]
>
> "I feel that tc, for me at least, ok I'm just speaking for myself and I'm sure that a lot of people could tell you the same thing – it has changed me physically, mentally, totally." [8.1.233-234]

- She feels healthier and younger than before her involvement in Tai Chi 10 years ago.

> "I think this keeps me young, and I feel a lot healthier, a lot stronger a lot younger than I did 10 years ago, and I probably look a lot younger too than 10 years ago" [8.1.543-546]

- Cathy also feels that by practising Tai Chi she has been able to overcome significant health problems . She no longer takes medication for either her arthritis or to help her breathing, and her blood pressure and bowel function is normal now [8.1.37-39, 42-43, 219, 219-224, 32-34, 224-225]. Although she continues to take low doses Rx medications for her diverticulosis and circulation, Cathy says she has significantly reduced her medication intake compared to her pre-tai chi days [8.2.379-403].
- She feels that her energy level has returned to what it was when she was active in cross-country skiing, walking, and cycling [8.1.44-48, 225], whereas before Tai Chi, Cathy was very tired without doing anything.

> "...now I get tired of doin' a whole day of tc, but, that's a normal tiredness, well before, I, I could crawl in a corner and cry, without doing anything. And then I would be so tired without doing anything." [8.1.86-88]
>
> "...I feel a lot better, I feel a lot healthier than 10 years ago, I can do everything now, and uh, so it's a, yeah it has been, just an amazing improvement." [8.1.42-43]

- Having been active all her life, Cathy finds that tc has helped her to maintain her flexibility as she aged

> "...I always have been active so I could say well I'm more flexible and all this but you know, I always have been active so its uh – I'm sure that it has improved but you know, at least, if it didn't improve, it didn't go down." [8.1.226-228]

- In addition, approximately 5 years ago, Cathy experienced an unexpected event related to her involvement in Tai Chi: After being diagnosed with an abdominal tumour, Cathy approached Master Moy and received a Chi Kung healing treatment from him, immediately after which her tumour spontaneously disappeared. To this day, Cathy says her family doctor, who had examined her before and after the treatment, acknowledges that Tai Chi has been very good to Cathy [8.2.373-459]. She also credits Master Moy for teaching her another healing approach when she fractured her MCPs in a car door [8.fieldnote2.24-29]

- Cathy forgets about all her worries during Tai Chi practise – she says it has helped her cope with the difficulties of caring for a sick family member [8.1.254-262, 371-372].
- Cathy says that Tai Chi has also changed her way of thinking – where previously she was self-critical and hard on herself, she no longer worries about what other people think of her [8.1.233-240]. She no longer holds resentment for events in her past, but has learned to let things in her past go and just concentrates on being 'a different person' [8.1.245-251: don't quote!]. Cathy has found that it is normal occurrence for Tai chi to bring out emotions in people, such as resentment or grief, so they can deal with them [8.2.79-103]. She believes that letting go of resentment, learning to open your heart to people and being compassionate, are all spiritual benefits related to tai chi practise. [8.2.331-345]
- Cathy says money is not as important to her as it used to be; compassion and helping others, particularly those less fortunate financially or physically is her main priority now, and finds this tremendously rewarding [8.1.240-245, 270-272]. She volunteers hours of her time each week instructing Tai Chi (and has a special interest in working with individuals with disabilities [8.1.462-502]), doing workshops, and organizing community service activities.

> "...quite often we hear this well 'you people don't get paid, it costs you a lot money to do this' you know 'and all your time' and all this and that, but if you have something like that you know, I think that's more than anybody needs. It was just fantastic, just gives you such a tremendous good feeling that you're that you – you know I said ' well you know I've gotten so much out of it, try to give a little bit back if I can'." [8.1.483-488]

- She also continues to feel a special connection with her Tai Chi master, who passed away in 1998. As an extension of her tai chi practise, Cathy has learned to connect her spirit, mind, and body, and to connect to the outer world (i.e. with people who have passed away) [8.2.362-369]

> "...you could call it spiritually, I still talk to Master Moy, and I still feel that his spirit is around, and, I know that he's still helping me, that he's still looking after me..." [8.1.278-279]

- Cathy says her husband saw how much her health had improved with the tai chi, that he decided to join tai chi as well, and has even encouraged her to go to workshops out of town because he sees how much better looks when she returns [8.2.413-417, 42[illegible]-436]

Comprehensive Summary: Anne

Background Information

- 58 yo married, Caucasian female (b. July 26, 1943)
- Excellent SR health: OA in C- and L-spine, Diverticulosis and Irritable Bowel, hx of numerous surgeries [9.1.183-200]
- Born in Canada, and educated in Mexico (HS completion) and Canada: B.Ed, 2 years of Nursing training, Dental Assistant diploma – Taught Spanish to adults, HS English, and did dental assisting. [9.1.30-40; 9.2.455-467]
- Traveled extensively – at 7yo, lived in Mexico x10years, worked across Canada (Montreal, Ottawa, BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, NWT). Stayed in one place no more than 7 or 8 years due to husband's job requirements [9.1.7-24].
- Leisure Activity Background: Walks the dog daily, does needlework (cross-stitch, needlepoint) and other crafts, paints, reads extensively, and writes [9.1.66-74]
- Growing up within the Mexican culture, Anne was exposed to traditions and beliefs that she says have coloured her way of thinking and behaviour. She says she notices differences in the way she thinks, compared to other people of her generation who grew up in North America, for example, in the way she sees death as being a part of life, something to be accepted rather than fought, and that she doesn't find the need to own a lot of material things [9.2.132-164; 176-186]
- Anne has grown up being exposed to complementary health approaches. At 11 years old, she was taught visualization and muscle relaxation techniques by a female curandera (healer) in Mexico, and throughout her childhood and adult life she has been learning relaxation (visualization, autogenic relaxation, deep breathing) and meditation practices [9.1.85-98; 9.2.104-106]. She has been practising meditation 2-3 times/week x20 mins for the past 3 years. Recently, Anne has tried Chi Gong from a book, but would like to have an instructor. [9.1.117-180]. Anne has seldom used herbal medicine, although she has been aware of it since childhood [9.2.443-448; 9.1.129-132]
- Anne uses relaxation techniques primarily for pain management (of arthritis, diverticulosis, and post-surgery). She reports positive results pre- and post-surgery that she attributes to relaxation therapy; she is able to mobilize more quickly and with less discomfort than the doctors expect, able to quickly clear her lungs of anaesthetic, and able to relax pre-surgery to such an extent that her blood pressure drops dramatically. [9.2.6-22]
- Anne says she practises meditation for spiritual benefit in that it helps her to examine her thoughts and focus her mind on her search for a higher being [9.2.25-36]
- TC background: First exposed to tc via TV program in early 80s. Took 6-week TTCS external course in 1988, had a break while completing University, then resumed tc, practising independently during the 6 years she lived outside Alberta (1990-1995) as she was unable to access the TTCS club near her and had had a negative experience with another tc school/instructor. When she returned to Edmonton in 1996, Anne joined TTCS and has practised with them continuously for the last 5 years. [9.1.206-228; 238-250; 9.2.202-219]
- Frequency of practise: While practising on her own, Anne did tc 2-3 times per week. Over the 5 years that she has been with the TTCS, Anne practises daily. She practises for 15 minutes alone at home on the days she is not in class, and for 1 1/2 hours on the 2 days when she attends tc class. [9.1.229-250]
- In the summertime Anne practises in her backyard (in BC she would practise tc on the beach) – Anne says she prefers practising tc outdoors – she enjoys the feel of the grass under her feet, and the sun [9.1.231-233; 748-768]

What Factors are Involved in Initiating Tai Chi Practice?

- Anne saw a TV program where people in Beijing were practising tc and thought the movements in tai chi were "absolutely beautiful" [9.1.206-208; 252-262]
- In her first year of university, Anne had more time than in later years, and the tai chi class was offered in her neighbourhood, close to home [9.2.41-54]
- A short, introductory tc course was offered at a location conveniently in her neighbourhood, advertised in the Public Schools flyer [9.2.374-375]
- While at university, Anne saw other TV programs, and heard other women talking about tc [9.1.215-217]
- Upon completing university, Anne had more free time, and she didn't want to lose the physical activity level she had gained while at university, so she registered for tai chi classes [9.1.466-469]

What Factors are Involved in Continuing/Returning to Tai Chi Practice?

- Anne's doctors' support and encourage her to continue with tai chi [9.1.474-476; 727-734]
- She feels that practising tai chi has benefited her physically, socially, emotionally, and spiritually [9.1.892-898]++. A major incentive to continue practising tai chi is that it has helped her to manage her osteoarthritis pain symptoms and maintain her mobility:

> "...this is what tc does for me, is it allows me to move and at the same time detach from the pain that I feel, from the OA....And so I'm not going to give it up [9.1.389-390; 399]

- Anne says she enjoyed doing tai chi and wanted to make it a part of her. Now that she has done tai chi regularly for the last 11 years, she feels tai chi has become a part of her, and it feels like something is missing from her day until she practises her tai chi set [9.2.217-234; 243-245]

> "It's just become a part of me now, I can't see not doing it. It's not a compulsion to do it, it's just that it's become part of me now and I'll just keep on doing it until the day I can't do it". [9.1.861-867]

- Anne says that tai chi never becomes repetitive for her because you never learn it completely. She says each time she does tai chi it is different for her and that she is continually learning the nuances of the tai chi set. Anne finds that her experience of the tai chi movements changes continually as her physical abilities change – for example, she notices that she performs the tai chi moves differently now that her flexibility has improved [9.1.868-889].
- Anne also enjoys the companionship and friendships that have evolved over the 5 years she has been involved in the tai chi group. She feels that she is able to give and receive support from the people in her group and feels a sense of community within her group and within the TTCS as a whole. Anne says that these aspects of tai chi have been very important to her ability to cope with difficulties in her personal life [9.1.892-898; 918-941; 955-967; 9.1.970-976].
- Coming to tc class provides an 'escape' from personal problems [9.1.908]

What is the Experience of Tai Chi?

- During warm-up exercises, Anne focuses on painful areas of her body. She mentally visualizes the muscles stretching, as well as physically moving the muscles through the stretch. She uses this technique to relieve some pain so she can then mentally detach from it [9.2.59-85]

- Anne says she finds tai chi both a relaxing and meditative activity, especially if she is practising alone, without distraction [9.2.249-270]
- Anne describes tai chi as 'walking meditation', where she does the moves without thinking, her body just flows with the moves, and her mind detaches and 'sorta goes blank'. She feels as though she is 'outside of time' or loses time. [9.1.263-363]

> A- "... when a person is doing the tc set, especially if you're doing it in a large group, and the group is together, working together, you do the set without thinking, your body just flows with it, and your mind, your mind just seems to detach. And you just do it without thinking. It's an amazing experience I can't explain it any other way! It doesn't happen all the time, and it will happen occasionally when I'm doing it alone, and I'll just get through a set and suddenly say 'I've finished it?" You know, I'd I reached a certain point – you lose track of time. You just sort of – you're outside of time. That's where the walking meditation bit comes in, because your mind just detaches. It's the most amazing thing[laughs]
>
> INT- So when you say about your mind detaching, is it fro – your mind detaches from your body, or your mind detaches from -
>
> A- From just whatever you're doing, you just seem to lose track of time, I don't know, you sorta go blank. It's the most amazing thing. [9.1.290-302]

- Anne generally focuses her concentration on doing the tai chi set, keeping track of where she is in the set, upcoming moves, her position in relation to other practitioners around her, and monitoring the amount of stress she puts on various joints. Interspersed with these thoughts, occasionally, is the experience of 'timelessness', during which Anne says she thinks of nothing. Anne describes this experience of timelessness as being 'in a bubble'; although she knows she is doing the tai chi movements, her body just flows through them automatically, and her mind 'detaches', thinking of nothing. This sensation lasts for a variable length of time, during which Anne is no longer aware of people or sounds around her. Occasionally, Anne gets so involved in practising tai chi that she forgets where she is in the set.

> A- "...what goes through my mind depends on what kind of a mood I'm in, quite often. I'm usually trying to get – trying to focus on doing the set, correctly, cause there's the placement of feet and the placement of your body the placement of your arms and shoulders. And there's a whole lot of things to keep in mind while you're doing it. Even after all these years we, we still have to think. And then, as you go along through the set you're you're keeping track of where you are in the set, what the next move is going to be where you're going to go for the next move watch out for the people on either side of you [laughs] cause some of us have a longer step than others. And and when the timelessness bubble appears, nothing. [9.1.428-436]

> "...you're aware that you're doing tc, but everything else seems to move off into the background there's nothing there but – you're in a bubble. You're in a bubble, that's what it is....It's almost as if you're in a bubble you don't –

> there's nothing else around you. It's a timelessness feeling, really great" [9.1.324-326]
>
> "...when you reach a certain point, I guess maybe that's when the timelessness the bubble comes in, is - some days, your body remembers the moves your body does the moves and your mind can go elsewhere. So your body's remembering and your mind has nothing to do with what your body's doing your body does it and your mind goes someplace else. Which is why I don't think you can force yourself to do that, to get into that state, because your body has to be able to do it on its own, then your mind can go" [9.1.496-502]

- Anne also experiences a sensation of 'losing herself' when deeply involved in other activities such as painting or intricate needlework. However, she does not experience the same physical relaxation effect as with tai chi (in fact, during these activities, she finds herself holding tension due to her body position and attention to the task at hand). As well, Anne notes that in contrast to tai chi where her attention is directed internally, painting and needlework involve focusing on an external project, so although she can 'get lost' in them, "it's not the same as when I lose myself in tc" [9.1.666-702]
- While Anne may experience some stray thoughts or visualize things at random while practising tai chi, she does not experience any specific thoughts or images [9.2.196-199]
- Sometimes, Anne feels a sensation of tingling in her hands and feet as she does tai chi. The first time she experienced this, Anne was very surprised, as she had read about energy flow but was skeptical about it [9.1.815-834].
- When she does tai chi with a large group that is moving in unison, Anne says that the group generates an energy that fills the room, and this energy keeps people moving [9.2.298-340]

> "...I've done tc when they've had a workshop here and there've been 50 or 60 people here all doing the same thing. And it's almost as if, there's an energy in the room that propels you, and it just keeps you going, and – when there's that many people obviously we can't do the same number of moves that we would do if we – if it was a smaller group. Like in some moves we have to do 7 repetitions in one direction, and there's no way you could do that without ending up, especially in the kitchen or something like that [motions to far end of the room]. So somebody will suddenly, you know, say '3 wave hands'. So everybody will s – everybody would just stop and then just turn as a group and they'd go into the next move, and it is the wildest sensation, that you are a part of this group and this group is generating an energy, which you can feel, you know and it's just, it's just all in the entire room." [9.2.303-314]

- Anne likes to practise tai chi outdoors because she just likes being outside. She enjoys the feel of the grass under her bare feet, and the feel of the sun. Outdoors, she feels more relaxed, there are less distractions to interrupt her, and it's a little more peaceful than indoors [9.1.748-773; 9.2.377-412]

Perceived Outcomes

- She says tai chi helps her get in touch with herself, both physically, in terms of enhancing her proprioception, as well as knowing how her body feels when it is healthy and when there is something wrong [9.1.266-286; 9.2.273-297]

- Anne says that tai chi helps her to manage the pain from her OA because: 1) as she performs the movements her attention shifts from her pain to concentrating on executing the movements properly; 2) she is able to pinpoint painful areas of her body and visualize stretching and relaxing muscles that are tight and directing her circulation towards them in order to reduce the pain; 3) by the end of the tai chi set, her body has 'loosened up' so that her pain 'is at a bearable level'. Sometimes she initially focuses on the painful location and uses visualization in order to reduce the pain, after which she can more easily detach from it [9.1. 9.2.59-85; 369-390; 399-402; 514] [see Lived Experience above as well]. Practising tai chi has also helped keep the effects of arthritis under control by keeping her flexible; Anne believes tc helped her to maintain her ability to walk without a cane [9.1.471-474]
- Anne feels relaxed and tired immediately after a tai chi set, and sometimes she's perspiring. [9.1.454-456].
- She has measured her heart rate and found that tai chi causes her to reach her target heart rate, but also that her heart rate returns to resting level within half a minute after completing the tai chi set [9.1.456-461]
- She notices that she has improved stamina and lung capacity – she notices this in day to day activities such as housework, climbing stairs, and gardening [9.1.465-466; 476-481; 716-726].
- She feels that tai chi has both a short term and long term relaxation effect, mentally [9.1.485-486]
- Anne believes that tai chi has acted, in combination with meditation and reduced home-life stress, to decrease her diverticulosis [9.1.515-525]
- Anne says shortly after starting tai chi the frequency of severe migraines decreased and she has not had one for the past 2 years. Prior to starting tai chi, Anne had suffered migraines since she was 13 years old – she had 2-3 per month and these were severe enough to require hospital-administered narcotic analgesics [9.2.413-441]. Anne commented that she had forgotten to mention this in the first interview because she is now migraine-free.
- Anne says that tai chi keeps her mentally alert, as she has to remember a sequence of 108 movements comprising the tai chi set. She believes that practising tai chi has improved her memory. It helps her remember sequential information/processes such as computer operations, that she would otherwise have difficulty recalling because she does them only occasionally [9.1.486-491; 9.2.349-363].
- Anne says that practising Tai Chi and meditation has helped her get in touch with her inner self, a part of her that is strong and stress-resistant. In stressful situations, she is able to draw on that inner strength. Thus, things that would normally have bothered her are not so bothersome since she has been doing tc and meditation. [9.1.531-546]
- Anne practises a Tai Chi set in her head sometimes, when she is waiting for an appointment – she finds this helpful as it leads to her thinking about some of her problems and helps her to consider her stressors and priorize them. She also finds doing a mental set of tai chi at bedtime effective for falling asleep [9.1.559-583; 590-601]

> "...if I'm if I'm waiting, I throw in an example if I'm waiting in the doctor's office and I don't have a book to read and you know what magazines are like in a doctor's office – I will mentally go through a tc set, do the set in my head, and that again is a form of, I guess meditation, because it it allows me to relax, and it allows me to get in touch with myself, and it's quite intriguing to do that, when you're sitting and you have nothing else to do or you're waiting for something or someone. And it's it's, it helps me get in touch with myself. I don't get stressed out if I have to sit and wait now. Cause I can sit

> and you know, instead of thinking about how long it's taking for the doctor to get through with their other patients I can sit there and I can do a tc set, and that will lead on to other things, you know, what, what's been stressing me lately, 'ok that's not important this is important maybe I'd better think about this one' it's almost a form of meditation....I don't know if other people do it, some people may some people may not but you know, it's just something I've found as a a trigger to relax me when I'm in a semi-stressful situation" [9.1.567-577; 581-583]

- Anne's experience with tai chi is that it has increased her self-awareness (of her body and her thoughts). By 'getting in touch with (her)self' Anne feels that tai chi has led her into further study about her own beliefs concerning spirituality. In this case, it has led her to examine Taoism and Buddhism more closely [9.1.611-659].

Comprehensive Summary: RA

Background Information

- 70 yo married, Caucasian male (b. Mar 7, 1931)
- Born and educated in Canada- Completed high school. Retired (x8 yrs) automotive parts machinist [10.1.9]
- Good SR health: Rheumatoid Arthritis, gout, high blood pressure, rosacaea, total knee replacement surgery on both knees [10.1.4; 16-17; 85]
- TC Background: Has practised tai chi x 12 years (since 1989). Began tc 3-4 years prior to retirement [10.2.67-72]. Also practises Lok Hup, a set related to tc. (Is currently president of the Golden Division (seniors' division) and is a branch council member of the TTCS. Has taken the instructors' course and does some assistant teaching).
- Frequency of practise: 2x/week for 1 1/2 hours (tc class) and once a week for 2 hours (Lok Hup class). At one point was doing 4x/week. More involved if assistant teaching.
- Other Activities: Tried Yoga 15-20 years ago for 1 year, but discontinued because he decided it wasn't for him.

What Factors are Involved in Initiating Tai Chi Practice?

- RA began tc in 1989, to help his knees, after his wife recommended he look into it (she had seen) a demonstration by the TTCS at her workplace [10.1.102-108]. He sat in on a class to watch at TTCS and liked the controlled movements and the way practitioners moved in close unison [10.1. 134-141; 156-158; 10.2.49-54]. TC struck him as being different from other martial arts that are fast, vicious, and require body contact; he thought tc was something he would be able to do so decided it was worth a try, so registered for classes [10.1.134-141].
- One reason why RA started and continues to practise tai chi at his current location is its proximity to home (a short drive or a convenient bus ride) [10.2.15-25]
- When he initially watched tai chi, RA found it was similar to watching a group of dancers and he got the feeling that they were all relaxed and not under stress as they moved. He liked the idea of being able to join a group of people and feel relaxed while moving with them. [10.2.27-48]

What Factors are Involved in Continuing/Returning to Tai Chi Practice?

- RA's wife joined 1 year after him so it became an activity that they could do together. [10.1.158-161] Both of them have continued with the same group ever since, and his wife gets upset if they can't make it [10.1.167-173].
- He finds that doing tai chi 2 days a week (and Lok Hup on Saturdays) gives his life some structure because he has something regular to engage in [10.1.161-167].
- As well, at each checkup, RA's doctor asks him if he's still going to tai chi. He gets the sense that his doctor thinks that tc is beneficial for him [10.1.460-464].
- Other reasons RA has continued with tai chi is that it helps his flexibility, he has become aware that it is supposed to work on internal organs, and generally makes him feel really good [10.1.249-257]
- Sometimes the warm up exercises become repetitious, but RA keeps his interest in tai chi by watching and comparing how the instructors do the various movements and sees that there is always the potential to improve his performance of them. He says that tai chi is an ongoing learning system in which you continually improve your understanding of the moves and your physical skills to do the moves [10.1.514-546]. He feels that the stage he is at now is that he is just beginning to learn about tc [10.1.604-616]
- The thing RA likes best about practising tai chi is the sense of accomplishment he felt for sticking with it and now being able to do it with a certain amount of flow in spite of

having a lot of difficulty and pain (from arthritis in his knees) when learning the set [10.1.604-616]

- At times, when he didn't want to go to tc, RA told himself it was good for his health, and that he needed to stick to it and had felt some benefit already

> "...there were times when I didn't wanna do it. But I thought 'well, it's gonna be good for my health, and I'm having all these problems and maybe I should give it a try, and one year wasn't gonna do it" and you know 'I can feel some benefits after the first year', sticking to it and uh getting to where I am now which is, beginning to learn, just beginning to learn" [10.1.604-616]

- Even though learning tai chi was difficult and painful for RA due to the arthritis in his knees, he experienced some sense of accomplishment and benefit early on; he says he felt better (see Experience of Tai Chi, below), and practising tai chi kept his mind off his work and everything for awhile [10.2.59-66].

What is the Experience of Tai Chi?

- RA can feel how the set will go as soon as he starts the set, because the first move makes him aware of how stiff or loose his hips and back are[10.1.258-265].
- He concentrates on a few moves, on how his body's feeling, and whether he's getting the results that he hears about from the instructor, at other times what you're doing is you're watching people who you know do those moves very well, and trying to emulate them [10.1.267-271]
- Now that he has learned the set and practised it repeatedly, RA finds that his body does the moves automatically, leaving his mind free to allow other thoughts to come into focus [10.1.319-320], or to simply be blank and think of nothing at all. At these times he is aware of sounds and other people in surroundings, but these sensations are not as clear as when he is not doing tai chi. Sometimes he finds that he gets partway through a set and doesn't realize that he has done it, almost as if waking from a daze or dream-like state [10.1.153-155; 273-274; 354-367]. He calls this state 'moving meditation' and feels like this is what meditation would be like if he could meditate [10.1.313-322; 387-195].

> "...sometimes you're doing a set and you kinda like come out of a daze and you don't know how far along in the set you are, you've been doing it without thinking at all" [10.1.153-155]

> "...you learn these exercises in this order, and then, if you do it enough times, it becomes such a habit that your body can do it, and your brain is now, free. I don't ever go a whole set that way, but, sometimes I go quite a ways with it – I don't I don't plan it, it just happens....Sometimes, yeah, maybe you're thinking about, maybe what you have to do in the afternoon, or maybe something that's bothering you, comes into focus, or sometimes, it's almost, almost blank. Which uh, I relate to the thought that I heard, someone told me that, 'that's moving meditation'. And I think that's where that would come in." [10.1.313-322]

- The sensation of 'moving meditation' happens only when he is in the middle of a group of practitioners, because he does not feel the pressure of others depending on him to cue their movements, and if he gets out of step, he is surrounded by others who he can follow. [10.Fieldnote2.16-20]

- RA asked wife about the sensation of mind going blank/moving meditation – she concurred that she experiences something similar and asked other students at the Tuesday group about this. Those who had practised for some time also agreed that they experience this sensation.
- (If too many thoughts come, he may lose his place in the set [10.1.331-347]

Perceived Outcomes

- RA has combined medication, surgery, and tai chi for management of his rheumatoid arthritis [10.1.108-129]. He feels that practising tai chi was an extension of his rehabilitation after his total knee replacement surgery; some of the tai chi moves were similar to the rehab exercises, and he says that tai chi strengthens the muscles supporting his knees, and noticed this even at the early stages of learning tai chi, [10.1.89-94; 10.2.82-83]. He finds that his overall flexibility has improved by then end of the tai chi set, and if he has mild shoulder pain at the beginning of the class, by the end the pain and stiffness has eased up or disappeared completely [10.1.119-129].
- In the early stages of tai chi, RA began to learn how to 'step with no weight', to change position without committing all his weight or lunging into the move, and this made him feel better.[10.2.78-90]
- RA also noticed that his confidence in his balance had improved; he had more confidence in how to react if he slipped on the ice. Now he finds that if he starts to slip, he's able to recover his balance. RA felt that when he did fall earlier this year, he sustained less of an injury than he would have if he hadn't been practising tai chi, and also recovered fairly quickly 10.2.91-107]. [verify this]
- RA has learned from tai chi instructors about how tai chi helps to move internal organs. He believes that all the tai chi movements are designed to move the internal organs, and although he cannot feel it himself, he takes it for granted that this occurs when he practises tai chi. An instructor also has a theory that the relaxed stance of tai chi allows abdominal muscles to extend rather than contract tightly, and so long-time practitioners' develop a pot belly; RA sees this in himself and so attributes the protrusion of his abdomen partly to this effect [10.1.576-600]
- RA finds that he is more relaxed and able to talk to people now than he was before he started practising tai chi, and has become an active member in other aspects of the tc organization to which he belongs (Is currently president of the Golden Division (seniors' division) and is a branch council member of the TTCS. Has taken the instructors' course and does some assistant teaching) [10.1.198-238]. As an example of how much he has relaxed, RA said that he would have had a terrible time doing an interview in the past, but currently felt comfortable and even said more during the interview that he had thought he would [10.2.149-151; 155; 620-621].
- Overall, he finds he is generally a more relaxed person, is less uptight and does not get angry as easily as he used to, or if he does become angry, it doesn't last and he reacts less strongly than he used to, but is unsure if this is related to practising tai chi or to retirement and having less stressors in his life [10.1.396-405; 10.2. 149-151;155]
- Spiritually as well, RA finds no conflict between tai chi and his religious beliefs [10.1.474-477]. He also says that now he is more accepting of not knowing what the afterlife holds and expends less energy concerning himself about it, but again is not sure if this is related to practising tai chi or to aging [10.1.478-185; 496-502]
- Another outcome of practising tai chi, according to RA, is that now he has been doing tai chi for some time, he is more aware of how other people move when he sees them walking [10.2.112-125]– i.e. he notices if they have a postural or gait abnormality, and says that both he and his wife tend to notice this in people walking by.

"...if you do enough of this (tc) stuff you, you start noticing other people too, you see somebody walking towards you and they got a limp or a, one shoulder's higher than the other or something and, and you know, you can, you just automatically say 'gee that's' you know sometimes you can figure out what's wrong but I can, I never, judge anything...You just notice notice the way people walk for some reason or another yeah. And sometimes when we're, oh just parking the car, somebody's walking across the street, my wife'll say 'gee that guy's got a bad leg or a bad knee or a hip or somethin' you know. And can tell the difference between a bad knee or a bad hip, which is pretty hard to do I find. She seems to know....Probably some cause she did nursing, uh, mostly with older people you know, what they call companion type thing. So she would get some from there. But I think she learned a lot from just watching people in tc" [10.2. 112-134]

Comprehensive Summary: Stan

Background Information

- 67 yo married, Caucasian male (b. July 7, 1934)
- Born and educated in Canada: Semi-retired investment executive
- Good Self-Rated health: Osteoarthritis in knees, High blood pressure [11.1.231-251; 259]. Interested in health issues [9.1.504-509], and has attended the education portion of the 'Live it Up' weight-management program. Stan is aware of the importance of exercise for health at his age, and finds that if he doesn't exercise for a few days, he feels sluggish and not as inclined to want to engage in physical activity.
- Tai Chi background: Began Tai Chi, with his wife, 5 years ago, after watching a demonstration by a tai chi instructor from Malaysia.
- Describes tc as:

  > "...exercise similar to, low level ballet...an exercise that involves thinking and...using all your muscles...low-intensity." [9.1.103-105]

- Frequency of practise: 1 hour, 2 days/week in the tc class, 15 min twice a week at home (does warm-up exercises mostly). Takes a 2-to 3-month break every summer [9.2.20]. Sees tc as one part of an active lifestyle and as an exercise for health as opposed to a sport for fun (e.g. like golf, tennis). Tai Chi has become an alternative form of exercise that complements his tennis and golf, as he has had to reduce the frequency and intensity of engagement in both sports due to his arthritis [9.1.452-487]. Stan says he is not as committed to tc as other practitioners he knows, but has practised consistently during the week for 9 months of the year, for the past 5 years.
- Other Leisure and physical activities: Tennis 2-3 hrs/week, gardening in summer 8-12 hrs/wk, golf (12 rounds/yr).

What Factors are Involved in Initiation of Tai Chi Practice?

- Stan saw demonstration by a tai chi instructor of middle age, and was impressed by her flexibility, and what great shape she was in
- Stan wasn't interested in taking what he considers difficult physical exercises, such as weight training. He saw tai chi as not a 'hard' exercise, in other words, it was a low-impact exercise that would not be very difficult, physically, on his knees.
- At the time he was looking for a tai chi class to join, he saw an advertisement in the paper for the organization that he is currently with, so signed up with them

What Factors are Involved in Continuing/Returning to Tai Chi Practice?

- Although Stan started tai chi in the south side branch of the TTCS, he switched to the West End location and has continued there ever since, as this branch is class is closer to home, and not as crowded.
- He also switched from evening to daytime classes, and says that doing so has given a positive boost to practising tai chi. He is not as tired as in the evening; his mind and body are more receptive to doing tai chi during the day. He also doesn't have the difficulty winding down for sleep as he did when he was physically active in the evening.
- Stan says that tai chi is appealing to him because it is continually challenging, but is taught at a pace that he can cope with:

  > "I think the fact that it [tai chi] is, fairly difficult to master, you know, it's kinda like dance steps or something, it has an appeal in terms of like it's a challenge, I mean it's not dead easy, you know, it's not as if you're doing repetitions that are mindless...But I mean, they uh, as you know they have a

> program of taking it pretty slow so, after a while we realized that, we could likely cope with it.' [9.1.48-51; 55-56]

> "...tai chi, is quite a sophisticated exercise, and it's just little moves that can throw you off....you could be doing it 10 years an not master the thing so I don't think it's something that you can say well you know 'I've been doing it for 3 years, I know all there is to know.' [9.1.172-173; 176-178]

- He enjoys learning from different instructors and finds that helpful for keeping tai chi interesting for him
- Other reasons why Stan kept practising tai chi were that he enjoyed coming, and he felt better. When he was still working full-time, Stan found that doing tai chi helped him to unwind, to relax, because it was an exercise that absorbed his thinking while he was doing it, and he could not be concentrating on anything else while practising.

> "...I was working then and I had quite a stressful job, so I found that I uh, I could kinda unwind – it it really is, if you're into it it absorbs your thinking, I mean, some exercise patterns you know, you can do them and be reading a paper or watching TV or something. They're not very um, they don't involve your mind. But this was really a combination of involving that you had to sorta dedicate your thinking to it, while you're doing it. Which is a little more unusual than, a lot of the other exercises you did. " [9.1. 61-68]

- Stan also says he continued even though initially it was difficult to master the tai chi routine because he doesn't like to start something and give it up without giving it a fair chance.
- Stan says that Tai Chi exercises different muscles compared to other physical activities he does, and finds that it helps his circulation more than those other exercises. [9.1.487-491]
- Stan is impressed by other tai chi practitioners' stories regarding why they do tai chi and how it makes them feel better; he has seen and talked to practitioners who are very committed to practising daily and has found that tai chi makes them feel so much better that it is a big part of their lives [9.1.302-309]
- He likes doing Tai Chi in a group atmosphere and and finds that he can practise in a class for 1 hour, whereas at home, he practises for 15-20mins because of distractions and difficulty concentrating. Stan says the group setting allows him to watch and follow other students and the instructor to cue him on moves and to follow them more precisely. He finds the atmosphere of the class relaxing and the instructors helpful and tolerant if he needs to leave early or take a break during the class.
- He believes that it is important for exercise to be interesting, otherwise he will not be able to maintain his interest and continue with it. He feels that Tai Chi, while not as fun as his other physical activities of golf and tennis, is clearly above the level of a repetitious activity such as stationary cycling in terms of maintaining his interest [9.1.281-291; 398-416]. For Stan, it is not the entertainment value of tai chi, but the health benefits that keep him coming to practise it; he recognizes that tai chi is an exercise that doesn't makes him feel better automatically, but takes time, and provides subtle but definite benefits. [9.1.277-300; 338-349]

What is the Experience of Tai Chi?

- Stan says he enjoys particular Tai Chi movements and looks forward to doing them because his body feels good to do those movements

- Sometimes Stan finds practising tai chi tiring enough that he has to stop and rest, he specifies that this tiredness is related specifically to his muscles, and not to getting winded
- He watches the instructor and other students to cue him on upcoming moves and their precise execution.
- When he is practising tai chi, Stan becomes absorbed in the moves, concentrating on executing them properly, and thinking about what move is coming up next, and this is what he finds relaxing about doing tai chi. Concentrating on practising tai chi blocks out other 'noises' or thoughts going on in his mind.

> "...I think that when you're working and you've got some problems at the office, this doesn't always happen, but, uh you're kinda thinking about them after work, you know, you you sort of take them home with you, you're still mulling them around. And I think that if you go to something like tc, it's a great distraction, I mean, your concentrating on the tc and it sort of blocks out a lot of other noises going on, in your mind." [9.1.124-128]

Perceived Outcomes

- Stan finds Tai Chi has been helpful helps to keep the arthritis symptoms in his knees under control– it has increased his flexibility and decreased soreness in his knees, and has also improved his balance

> "... it is difficult to be definitive or very precise in providing details with regard to feeling better; however maybe I can give you examples of improved functions. I notice after several weeks of continuous TC that I can –
>
> Go up and down stairs better
> Get in and out of chairs and cars better
> Walk for longer periods without sore knees
> Less soreness of knees at bedtime and during the nite (sic)
> Generally move faster (wife has not noticed much difference)" [11.Addendum1.17-24]
>
> On the question of balance – can get around tennis court faster. (G)enerally better mobility, and when re-starting TC it is much easier to do the one legged kicks (separate foot left and right) after several weeks of training." [11.Addendum1.28-30]

- He finds that Tai Chi improves his circulation- During Tai Chi, his heart rate goes up (from 60 at rest, to 100 or 110 after an hour's practise), and having practised tai chi over time (in conjunction with retiring and changing his diet) his high blood pressure is under control; Stan is currently on the lowest level of hypertension medications in the last 25 years. He also notices that tai chi assists his circulation in his hands and feet, which are not as cold, and he is less inclined to feel sluggish or have minor headaches, all symptoms that he believes are related to his blood circulation.
- After practising tai chi, Stan finds his shoulder and leg muscles feel tired, and although he doesn't find that they have bulked up noticeably, he finds that his muscles are firmer, more toned.
- Stan also finds that he feels refreshed after practising Tai Chi, as it offers a distraction from other thoughts or problems of the day.

Appendix G

Paraphrase Lists With Supporting Text

Catherine
Paraphrase List: Tai Chi Initiation

Influence from distant past (years before started tc)

1. There was a Buddhist monk doing tc
    1.1) it was quite beautiful
2. The head monk said (tc is) an excellent thing to combine with meditation

> "...in England there was a Buddhist monk- I don't know where he was from, he could have been Thai- who was outside in his ochre robe, doing tc. And it was quite beautiful and the head monk said it's an excellent thing to combine with meditation. And at the time I...it registered but I didn't say well, 'eventually I'm going to take tc, too'...and the person in the garden doing tc will never know the influence that he had. And I didn't know at the time either. I don't know who he was – he was just – he was doing tc." [2.1.172-175; 181-183]

3. I've been rather enchanted with the East - (that maybe drew me to TC)

> "...can't think of where else it might come from...other than the fact that...I've been rather enchanted with – with the East in general, not to make it specific in any way, but, with the East in general, because I think...it's something that in the West we haven't really had enough of yet, we haven't really embraced it enough. " [2.1.186-188]

> INT- you had also mentioned that part of what maybe drew you was also your interest in the East, is that right?
> C- mm [2.3.192-194]

4. I saw a course advertised

> "...about 5 years ago I saw a course advertised in the Grant MacEwan catalogue and registered for that..." [2.1.24-25]

> INT- when you did hear about the Extension Centre's tc class, did you actually seek it out yourself? Or how did that come to be?
> C- ...one of the things I like to do – it sounds boring- but I like to know what courses are being given in a city. So when the catalogue comes, I generally flip through it just to see what they're offering in this city... [2.1.202-207]

5. (The TC class is) not very far from where we live

> "...the Extension building at the time – Corbett Hall was a short walk from where I lived, and I had also taken art courses there at one time..." [2.1.207-209]

> "...Grant MacEwan is not very far from where we live." [2.2.21]

6. (My previous TC instructor) recommended that I go to study under (my present instructor)

"(My previous TC instructor) recommended that I go to study under (my present instructor)" [2.1.36-37]

"(My previous TC instructor) said just go to the [location name], and meet Master ___, you'll be impressed..." [2.1.99-100]

7. I discovered that I had osteoporosis – it increased my fervour for TC
    7.1) I saw myself with a widow's hump, you know, and a broken bone, and a wheelchair, and nursing home, and I thought, 'Not me!'
    7.2) It increased my fervour for physical (exercise) overall, but it couldn't be excessive because might break a bone, crush a vertebrae or

INT- you said you had already planned to go back to tc once you retired and then you found out that you had the osteoporosis, but you were already going – all of the activities happened
C- it increased my fervour
INT- OK, for activity overall – for physical exercise overall
C- for tc
INT- oh for tc
C- Yeah physical overall too....But it couldn't be excessive because might break a bone, crush a vertebrae or, so tc was
INT- nothing high impact
C- yeah [2.3.214-220]

"...just a month before I retired, I discovered that I had osteoporosis. That I had bones of a woman much older that I am. And I was appalled, because I've always prized good health, and I have always been healthy. And to be told that I had bones of a woman much older than I was, uh...scared me. And I sort of – I saw myself with a widow's hump, you know, and a broken bone, and a wheelchair, and nursing home, and and I thought, 'Not me!' So, my husband found a book on weightlifting at the library and I immediately learned that – bought the weights and learned to do that at home. And followed her regime – Joyce Vedral weightlifting 'Bone building Body shaping' something like that....when I retired and I had the weightlifting and immediately, um tc, and I decided to walk everyday, 30 minutes at least. And take Fosamax.". [2.1.318-326; 330-332; 367-368].

8. I had retired by the time I actually started to practice intensely

"I had already retired too, by the time I actually started to practice intensely." [2.1.38-39]

"I had intended to go to the- (TC master's) class anyway, as soon as I retired. I mean, when I went there briefly, the year before I retired, I knew that I couldn't incorporate the regime into my teaching, because Monday morning and Wednesday mornings I would be at school! Teachers can't take the class. So I just postponed that, but when I retired in June of 1998 I had the weightlifting and immediately, um tc, and I decided to walk everyday, 30 minutes at least." [2.1.327-331; 365, 370-371]

9. I decided that tc might help me see my way through (the challenges of menopause, teaching, and raising a family)

> "...at that time I had um started hormone replacement and then declined to take it because it caused blood clots in my fingers, and so I was dealing with all of the earmarks of menopause, and teaching, and raising 2 stepchildren, and I had quite a lot to do. And I think with all of that I decided that tc might help me see my way through." [2.2.17-20]

9.1) I started out doing tc accepting that something good might come from it

> "...I suppose that I would have to say I started out doing it accepting that something good might come from it. " [2.1.240-241]

Catherine
Paraphrase List: TC Continuation

> "I never resent going or say 'I wish I could just skip' or whatever...it's it's a combination of things – I suspect it's very good for me, from what I've observed. It's an aesthetic experience, and especially at the Sword class, I'm a part of that – the geography of that group, and I don't do the Sword well with any other group – you know I tried last night and it doesn't do much for me - but this one does. And I go in honour of him, and of __ also, who taught me also." [2.3.261-266]

1. Here it's the same people, more or less, you have a sense of continuity

   "...here it's the same people, more or less...you have a sense of continuity..." [2.1.108-109]

   - here it's the same people, more or less
   - you have a sense of continuity

2. My energy isn't depleted by doing other things (now I'm retired)

   2.1) I sort of let the tc be my focus for the week

   "...my energy isn't depleted by doing other things [now I'm retired], I sort of let the tc be my focus for the week" [2.1.109-110]

   "...if you're retired you don't have that kind of pressure" [2.1.124]

3. I'm learning from a very good teacher

   3.1) Studying under her has made me want to be able to go through the whole routine entirely on my own

   "And right now I'm learning from L___, who is very adept at what she does, a very good teacher and uh, studying under her has made me want to be able to go through the whole routine entirely on my own without any assistance from anyone else." [2.2.62-65]

4. I suspect (TC is) very good for me, from what I've observed

   "...I go through that routine, knowing that some mysterious good is being done for me, and that my respiration and my heart rate and my blood pressure, and maybe even my bones will be improved if I do this every day. " [2.2.92-95]

   "...I suspect it's very good for me, from what I've observed." [2.3.261]

   4.1) I concluded that if TC helped to keep (my TC master) physically and mentally alert, until age 89, it must have something for everyone

   "...[my first teacher] had me convinced that good things would come from this. [My present TC master] is very highly regarded and I just concluded that anyone of his venerable age who could still teach tc and be honoured as the Master must have lots to offer and if its – that's what put him there or helped to keep him physically and mentally alert, until age 89, it must have something for everyone." [2.3.252-256]

"...[my TC master is] a very powerful man, he has such presence...he is the moving force behind that whole group." [2.3.256;259]

"...because someone said it was good for us" [2.2.183]

5. We enjoy it

"...we do it because we enjoy it..." [2.2.182]

5.1) I enjoy doing it with a the group

"I enjoy doing it with a group" [2.2.317]

"...I enjoy the social aspect of the group " [2.3.78-81]

"...those 2 days, you can be guaranteed that you will be in the company of people who are gentle people..." [2.3.95-96]

"...it's an offer of...some fellowship, as Christians say – fellowship..." [2.3.96-98]

6. It's an aesthetic experience - If there's a beautiful place, I seem to have the need to do TC there

"...if there's a beautiful place, I seem to have the need to do the Sword or the need to do tc there, so I found the places along the lake, under the trees, where I can do the Sword, outside, out of the sun, or I guess the mottled sun..." [2.2.342-344]

7. I'm a part of that – the geography of that group

7.1) I don't do the (TC) Sword well with any other group

"It's an aesthetic experience, and..especially at the Sword class, I'm a part of that – the geography of that group, and I don't do the Sword well with any other group – you know I tried last night and it doesn't do much for me - but this one does." [2.3.262-265]

8. I go in honour of (my teachers)

"...I go in honour of him (my TC master), and of (the assistant teacher) also, who taught me also."[2.3.261-266]

9. I practice tc cause I like the results

"...I practice tc, and I practice meditation, cause I like the results." [2.2.375-376]

Catherine
Paraphrase List: Lived Experience

1. The movement of TC is like a slow, beautiful dance

   "...the movement of tc is...more like a dance..." [2.1.215-216]

   1.1) (TC) is synchronized movement

   "...it appears to be a slow dance..." [2.3.271]

   "...it is beautiful, it's a synchronized...movement performed by a number of people, or one person." [2.3.280-282]

   1.2) It's like watching a moving fortress

   "...it's like watching a moving fortress." [2.3.61]

2. I enjoy the Chinese music (that we have with TC)

   "...we have music, Chinese music, which is quite pleasant, I enjoy it." [2.2.120-121]

3. It's a total necessity to be mentally and physically in touch with what's going on and where you're supposed to be (when you do TC)

   "..It's sort of a total, a compelling .necessity to be mentally and physically in touch with what's going on and where you're supposed to be." [2.2.132-134; 403-403]

   3.1) TC requires concentration

   INT- Right, ok. Have you , in your personal experience come to see some similarities between doing your meditation and doing tc?

   C- They both require concentration... [2.2.242-244]

   3.2) The main point is to focus on the movements as you do them
   3.3) If I'm distracted or thinking about other things I (don't) remember the routine
   3.4) if you're in a group of people you just fit right back in but if you're alone, you have to start all over again

INT- ok, sure. Um, can you tell me a little bit about what sort of thoughts or sensations you're experiencing when you're actually doing either the sword or the tc pattern. What goes through your mind, or what are you feeling in your body, or emotionally, if anything?

C- .....Well, the main point in doing the Sword in tc, is to focus on the movements as you do them. And if you start thinking about other things you'll forget what to do, and it's very obvious, because you're standing there with everyone....It's sort of a total, a total..necessity to being mentally and physically in touch with what's going on and where you're supposed to be. Quite demanding, and as soon as you allow your mind to go off, you get lost, you don't know where you are – if you're in a group of people you just fit right back in but if you're alone, you have to start all over again. And....if I'm distracted – I was distracted by the news that, that I hadn't – my bones had not improved since this last year – I found that disturbing the first day, and one of the first things I did after the phone call, was go and do tc. But I didn't remember the routine, I just did it – I don't know if I did it correctly or not, because I was – I was distracted...[2.2.127-140]

3.5) I can be thrown off and distracted by someone coming into the room during a round, or by the proximity of someone

> "...I can be thrown off and distracted by someone coming into the room during a round...or by the proximity of someone who comes in and stands nearby." [2.2.76-78]

4. I'm not too terribly aware of everyone else in the class, except my teacher, when I'm doing (TC)

> "...I'm not too terribly aware of everyone else in the class when I'm doing it, except my teacher, cause I like to gauge my speed according to hers..." [2.2.71-73]

5. At a certain point in the tc routine, I almost inevitably take a deep breath – it just occurs - you've achieved some maximum level of, of well-being

> "...at a certain point in the tc routine, I notice almost inevitably, I take a deep breath – not because I think about it and do it but because it just occurs. And, I know that we as a general rule, we don't breathe deeply enough, but at least in tc you can breathe deeply, profoundly, at least once per session, per round." [2.2.68-71]

INT- ...you had mentioned that about halfway through your tc pattern, you notice that you take this deep breath all of a sudden, and I thought that was really interesting. Um, and uh...that it happens right in the middle and why you think that might be?

- C- Well, it might be because everything is being aligned and because the circulation is beginning to strengthen and there may be a certain threshold that has arrived at....there is a relief, and the relief is expressed as a sort of a big sigh, a big breath, a sense of well-being, at last you've achieved some maximum level of, of well-being. [2.2.196-

6. You lose the sensation of the overt physical act (of doing TC)

6.1) With TC, your hands, mind and the sword become one unit

> "With tc the – everything is your own body [demonstrates hand movements and weight shifts in sitting] and your hands become the sword and your mind, eventually, you hope, becomes the sword, you know, one unit, one thing, given to achieving an end while engaged in the 'means'." [2.2.164-166; 407-409] [overlap with perceived outcomes]

> "For me...the actual sword itself, the object in my hand, I think is, an advantage, because I have been so much of my life with a pen or a paintbrush in my hand, and often when I'm writing, I don't have a sensation of writing so much as just the flow – I don't know if I can express that so well. The pen is merely a vehicle, and the language is merely a vehicle for what I'm about.

You lose the sensation of the clumsy physical act, which – not clumsy – overt....like if you're really painting you forget that your really painting and you're ___ing and image, you're actually achieving some kind of goal that you set out to do – you forget that this thing in your hand is a tool, but it serves as a focus and the sword, in a way, serves a focus, for me." [2.2.150-158]

"But to use it [the sword] just as a tool of focus, is a good thing." [2.2.163-164]

7. Doing (TC) is an aesthetic experience that is enhanced by the addition of a natural element

7.1) I'm a part of the geography of the group

" (TC) It's an aesthetic experience, and.. especially at the Sword class, I'm a part of that – the geography of that group, and I don't do the Sword well with any other group – you know I tried last night and it doesn't do much for me - but this one does." [2.3.262-265]

7.2) I like to do [tc, sword] outside in natural surroundings, or when the sun's shining through the window and everything is quiet

"...I like to do these things [tc, sword] outside in natural surroundings, or when the sun's shining through the window – the addition of a natural element can enhance the aesthetic aspect of my art." [2.2.348-350]

"And at the cottage I do it outside cause that's the only place to do it, and that's good too – it's nice to do it in the open air." [2.2.97-99]

"...once I did it [on] the beach in Mexico...the sea is a good teacher – it's a good image to think." [2.2.99,106-107]

"...the sun shines in the window and everything is quiet..." [2.2.51-52]

"...I like it when the sun shines in, it's quite a – it's very pleasant." [2.2.121]

7.3) I found the places along the lake, under the trees, where I can do the Sword, outside(in) the mottled sun, and that was an aesthetic experience

7.4) TC's a way of seeing what is around you and seeing yourself in relation to that surrounding

7.5) I'm not so sure you can separate aesthetics and spirituality - Just experiencing the (TC) movements (in a natural environment) would be (like) the service of a church

"I have to tell you this little story that maybe my religion – if you want to call it that- is what is beautiful, and of course I have my own idea of beauty, but, if there's a beautiful place, I seem to have the need to do the Sword or the need to do tc there, so I found the places along the lake, under the trees, where I can do the Sword, outside, out of the sun, or I guess the mottled sun, and that was an aesthetic experience. And, it's a way of seeing what is around you and seeing yourself in relation to that surrounding. You might say that another religion is, or, another aspect of my own personal religion in to keep the environment as in- as whole as possible and as undefiled as

> possible, because what is natural to me is most beautiful. And so I like to do these things outside in natural surroundings, or when the sun's shining through the window – the addition of a natural element can enhance the aesthetic aspect of my art. I'm not so sure you can separate aesthetics and spirituality because if you look any of the church – many of them – most of the churches, most of the religious structures, they strive for what is beautiful in order to encourage the people who are there to enter into a frame of mind that causes them to be spiritual....So I don't know where I might do tc next, but it could quite well be that again on a beach, or on a mountain top so, and just experiencing the movements, which would be I guess, the service of a church, in the environment – in a natural environment." [2.2.340-357]
>
> "Spiritually, I get a great charge out of just everyday life actually, it's awesome, I mean, sun rising in the morning, shining on the trees – I know it's all scientifically explained but that's pretty spiritual, if by spiritual you mean it gives you great joy." [2.2.298-301]

8. If you (don't) remember the last steps you were taught you (look) at your classmates to see what to do

> "...if you didn't remember the last steps you were taught, you were looking around at your classmates to see what to do.' [2.1.104-106]

9. When you forget the step (in TC) it's embarrassing, sort of unnerving

> "...when you forget the step (in TC) it's so obvious that it's embarrassing..." [2.2.239-240]
>
> "...[TC instructor] would get us to perform for him at the beginning of each class and it was sort of unnerving because, you know, if you didn't remember the last steps you were taught... [2.1.103-104]
>
> "...the suffering that occurs when you realize that you don't remember the next step and you're in the middle of the floor and your teacher is watching you [laughs]." [2.1.241-243]

10. (TC) complements sitting meditation
    10.1) (Like sitting meditation, TC) performs a calming and a lining up of thought processes, rather than a jamming of thought processes whereby you feel like you're getting bombarded by all of the things you have to do

> "...with tc, it's a more meditative approach to life..." [2.3.162]
>
> "...sitting meditation performs...a similar calming and a lining up of thought processes [to tc] , rather than a jamming [demonstrates with fist and hand] of thought processes whereby you feel like you're getting bombarded by all of the things you have to do, or whatever your concerned about." [2.2.216-219]

    10.2) TC is so physically active (in contrast to sitting meditation, which is) absolutely motionless, and all of the attention focuses inward.

"This morning I- I did tc, and the Sword, and then I went to sit for a bit on the bench. And I found an interesting contrast between the 2 procedures – one is so – so physically active and the other is absolutely motionless, and all of the attention focuses inward. It was an interesting contrast. I can see why years ago, the head monk said it was a – tc was a good thing to combine with meditation." [2.3.239-243]

Catherine
Paraphrase List: Perceived Outcomes

1. Part of the beauty of tc is that...you kind of achieve the means and the ends simultaneously

   "...perhaps that's part of the beauty of tc is that...you kind of achieve the means and the ends simultaneously. Because tc is a series of – of moves...and you perform them in order to achieve an end we are not fully cognizant of...." [2.2.178-183]

2. TC helps the difficult symptoms (of menopause)
   - 2.1) There is the social component – an offer of fellowship
   - 2.2) (TC's) an offer of routine
   - 2.3) TC I think has a leveling, calming effect
   - 2.4) If (TC) helps you to control your urges to eat or your urges to indulge in self-pity or your urges to verbally lash out then it's of enormous value

   "I think any regular exercise would help the difficult symptoms – feeling really hot one moment and feeling really cold the next moment, and worrying excessively, uh, mm, crying out of the blue, feeling depressed, all of those things, sleeplessness, I mean, physical activity helps, but tc, because there are these other components of the social and the regular aspect of it – in this case, this place is open on Wednesday and Friday mornings, everyday throughout the year except Christmas and New Year's, and except when it's 40 below. I mean, those 2 days, you can be guaranteed that you will be in the company of people who are gentle people, learning something you want to learn too" [2.3.88-92-96].

   "..for someone who's menopausal, it's an offer of routine...and some fellowship...and the physical aspects of it.." [2.3.96-98]

   "...TC I think has a, a leveling, calming effect. Why it helps with menopausal, in some cases at least, I mean you can just take it off the top of your head that it's physical activity that's regular" [2.3.102-104].

   "...but if it (TC) helps you to control your urges to eat or your urges to indulge in self-pity or your urges to verbally lash out then it's of enormous value..." [2.3.105-107]

3. (TC) moves the energy (chi) around in your body – this creates good circulation and adequate respiration and an alignment of all of the organs of the body, and consequent emotional balance

   "I would probably say that...the chi is the energy that moves around in the body – as I understand it anyway – as you do these forms, as you do these movements, and that this is partly, presumably, what creates good circulation and adequate respiration and an alignment of all of the organs of the body, and then the consequent emotional balance." [2.3.274-278]

   - 3.1) In tc you can breathe deeply, profoundly, at least once per session

> "...I know that we as a general rule, we don't breathe deeply enough, but at least in tc you can breathe deeply, profoundly, at least once per session, per round." [2.2.70-71]

4. I can remember things more clearly than I might have if I were not doing (TC)
   4.1) (TC) has improved my concentration skills

> "...having gone through the lessons and fairly regular home practice, I would have to say that at this stage of my life, it has improved my concentration skills and that...I can remember things clearly – more clearly than I might have if I were not doing it**" [2.1.243-246]

   4.2) It's just more pleasing to be able to have more facts at your fingertips
   4.3) When I learn tc I sort of anticipate, sometimes, which move comes next, all the while trying to concentrate on the move I'm doing, and this same thing seems to be occurring in you know, say, the driving a route

> "When you're approaching 60, as I am...I sometimes can't grab a name as quickly, or a word, as quickly as I might have done, 20 or 30 years earlier....I do appreciate my own performance when I don't have to look in a dictionary or find a synonym that is suitable...It's just more pleasing to be able to have more facts at your fingertips, and tc – if that's what it is, maybe it's merely retiring ....– but I would say that....the recall is sharper – if I read a newspaper article, I have more details when I discuss things....The way to the cottage is quite typical- prairie landscape and the route has not been particularly evident to me what corner comes before which other corner, if in fact there are many corners, and now, I can almost describe the whole route...um, partly because, well when I learned, when I learn tc I sort of anticipate, sometimes, which move comes next, all the while trying to concentrate on the move I'm doing, and this same thing seems to be occurring in you know, say, the driving a route, which we take often....Now I can sort of describe it in relation to various things. This seems to be of little importance, but I notice it's a change in my strength of recall" [2.2.261-266; 267-274; 277-278]

5. I just don't withdraw from challenging situations as much as I used to

> "I just don't withdraw from challenging situations as much as I used to and so I just interpreted that as a more aggressive approach to life, but 'assertive' is better." [2.3.10-12]

> "For example, on the weekend at dinner, someone said out loud...'She's emptying wine down the drain' And I finished what I was doing and turned around and said 'I'm rinsing a wine bottle' instead of saying something rude or less than elegant, the dinner went on and nothing more was said about that. And it's the measured quality of what I do and say that I find gratifying, and 'assertive' I would say that that's assertive without being unnecessarily retaliatory." [2.3.14-19]

   5.1) I don't mind stating my opinion when before, I might have just let things slide

> "...doing the Sword from March until now of this year, has made me much more decisive, um, and a little aggressive, I have to admit – verbally

aggressive – now, I don't mind stating my opinion when before, I might have just let things slide, or overlook something that I might find offensive, I'll now voice my offense. Um, probably it's more difficult to live with but it's more honest." [2.1.247-251]

6. TC makes you decisive and strong
   6.1) Doing tc seems to help you make observations about yourself
   6.2) (TC) helps you make decisions and keep them more solidly than you would if you weren't doing it

"I think that whatever the discipline involves, it helps you make decisions and keep them more solidly than you would if you weren't doing it." [2.2.252-253]

"...doing the Sword from March until now of this year, has made me much more decisive..." [2.1.247-248]

"...doing tc seems to help you make these observations about yourself, seems to make you – seems to help you resolve to do something about it, and it seems to help in the process of keeping the resolution...because it has that advantage, at least, seemingly, of making you be decisive...and strong. And that's a good feeling, feeling strong" [2.1.298-302; see coffee example, 2.1.283-298]

"I think that whatever the discipline involves, it helps you make decision and keep them more solidly than you would if you weren't doing it. " [2.2.252-253]

"...it [tc] seems to help in the process of keeping the resolution...because it has that advantage, at least, seemingly, of making you be decisive...and strong. And that's a good feeling, feeling strong." [2.1.300-302]

- *TC taught me that consuming liquor influences my performance the following morning and helped me sacrifice drinking wine*

"I noticed when I started doing tc, that I had trouble balancing, and certainly when I was doing the Sword, I had trouble balancing- the next morning. If I had wine the night before, there were certain movements in tc that I was uncomfortable doing. So I thought, 'I'll try not drinking wine' and sure enough, it was better....so tc taught me that consuming liquor influences my performance the following morning." [2.1.258-262, 271-272]

- *I didn't miss (wine), and didn't even want it, didn't even enjoy it on the occasions when I was socially required to have some*

"...you need to sacrifice some of the things of the so-called 'good life' if they interfere with your ability to focus or balance....And you learn how to sacrifice too. I think that – I would say that....it's interesting – when I discovered that I wasn't able to balance when I started the sword, as well as I wanted to, I just, just decided myself that I would not drink wine the night before – I was drinking wine because apparently one glass keeps cholesterol down, and that was presumably the reason. But I noticed that I didn't miss it, and didn't even want it, didn't even enjoy it on the occasions when I was socially required to have some." [2.2.246-252]

7. (TC) helps us transcend everyday concerns, struggles or dilemmas

"...I suppose they (art and TC) are all tools to transcendence...anything reasonable that helps us transcend...everyday concerns or struggles or dilemmas, basically is good." [2.2.363-365]

"...if you turn to it (TC) when you're distressed...then it's a good instrument, because it helps you transcend...." [2.2.372-374]

7.1) (TC) seem(s) to be a way of lessening the pain of disappointment and concern

"...I think it's significant that the other day when I felt disappointed that I hadn't built my bones up over the last year, and was concerned that I might have some debilitating disease that was causing this deficiency, that I did tc. Not with any – as I said I don't know if I did all correctly but it seemed to be a way of lessening the pain." [2.2.368-372]

"...I was distracted by the news that, that I hadn't – my bones had not improved since this last year – I found that disturbing the first day, and one of the first things I did after the phone call, was go and do tc. But I didn't remember the routine, I just did it – I don't know if I did it correctly or not, because I was – I was distracted, and I just felt the movements were alleviating some of the distraction. And it didn't matter that I wasn't doing it correctly at that time, so maybe some of the sequences were wrong, for example." [2.2.136-142]

8. I can do TC to deal with some of my own aggressive feelings

"I suppose in dealing with some of my own aggressive feelings – I'm angry or something – I can go out in the garden and do the Sword the way a tennis player might go to a court and whack away at the ball." [2.2.161-163]

9. (TC) enables you to – to handle things in a wiser method

9.1) TC) is actually self-defense, but not self-defense in an aggressive way, more in an internal building way

"(TC) it is actually self-defense, but not self-defense in an aggressive way, more in an internal building way, whereby it enables you to – to handle things in a wiser method." [2.3.271-274]

9.2) Before I practised (meditation) or tc...I would react without consideration more often

9.3) With tc, it's a more meditative approach to life and you can consider what it (the aggravating comment or the act) is

"Well, in retrospect, I would say that before I practised Vipassana or tc...I would react without consideration more often. And, if it's emotionally you're specifically interested in, I believe this is pertinent, because the way you react to a comment or an act, is informed by your emotional response at the time, and so, with Vipassana and with tc, it's a more meditative approach to life and you can consider what it (the aggravating comment or the act) is, sometimes surprisingly to yourself..." [2.3.158-163; 316-317]...the measured response is very important and the reflection on how you act or what you say, is the only way you can learn. If you don't look back on it, you're just going from one instance to another blindly. [2.3.178-181]

9.4) If you can control your movements you can control your thoughts

"...if you can control your movements you can control your thoughts, and that's, I presume, some spin-off from tc is that you're hopefully not not so inclined to say or do something that is without consideration." [2.2.324-327/439]

"I don't mean control of other people, I mean control of the tongue, which is the worst thing to control...and being compassionate...with someone I find it difficult to be compassionate with" [2.3.25-26, 31-32]

10. TC helps you more fully appreciate life

10.1) TC helps me to get more from (nature)

"...(if) you turn to it (TC) when you're enjoying nature then it's a good instrument, because it helps you...more fully appreciate life." [2.2.373-374]

"...I like planting things, like harvesting things...and maybe tc helps me to observe more of it, I get more from it." [2.2.306-307]

10.2) You will find life more pleasant, and that you will have more to give of quality

"...the main benefits will be, if you learn it well, and practise it faithfully, I would predict that you will find life more pleasant, and that you will have more to give of quality, and that's the best we can hope for." [2.3.289-291]

Sally
Paraphrase List: TC Initiation

1. I saw (TC), in action - We would stand and watch the TC group doing demonstrations at the fringe
    - 1.1)(I liked) the music
    - 1.2)I liked watching these people moving in unison
    - 1.3)I like(d) the slowness of tc
    - 1.4)I was picking up the energy that flowed within that group and out to some of us who were standing there watching

> "The __ tc group over here in Mill Creek...did tc demonstrations at the fringe....So we would stand and watch them, and they had some music going, and I- partly it was the music I know – but it was also watching these people move in a set together and the – I like the slowness of tc, um, and the moving in unison, and, I'm sure without being able to have identify it in those days, I was again picking up the energy that flowed within that group and out to some of us who were standing there watching. And I said to G__ (husband), 'I'd like to try this' [4.1.165-174]

INT- Right, ok. Um, so, was you first exposure to tc actually at the fringe when you saw it? /S-Yeah /INT- Or did you know about it before

S- I think I knew about it. But um, only as a name and as a form of exercise, simple as that. And it wasn't really until I saw it, in action, that I began to understand and have my appreciation for it. [4.1.196-199]

[Motivation to Return to TC]

2. The after work, once a week program offered at (my workplace) was ideal
3. The interest in (TC) never died - I really wanted to get back to doing some of that

S- ...I didn't pick it up again, until I saw (the) program at the G (my workplace). But the interest in it never died, you know, there's always 'I must get back to that someday'. So when (they) offered the after work, once a week program, that was ideal. You know

INT- So that was convenient for you

S- Oh, oh yeah, it fit in, and I really wanted to get back to doing some of that." [4.1.182-186]

Sally
Paraphrase List: TC Continuation

1. I know that a certain amount of physical exercise per week is important for one's overall health, um, so, I'll come to tc

   S- ...I know that a certain amount of physical exercise per week is a, is important for one's overall health, um, so, I'll come to tc....
   INT- Yeah, Ok. From both a, sort of a health practitioner perspective where you know you need to get some exercise /S-yeah [4.2.71-75]

   1.1) It was the only physical exercise I was getting (early on)

   "...I wasn't tempted to stop the tc [during stress of parent's illness and death], if for no other reason that it was the only physical exercise I was getting at that point.' [4.1.248,249]

   1.2) (TC is) just part of the whole week of (a variety of exercises) I set out for myself (presently)

   "INT-...I think it's interesting that you feel like you get so much out of it, doing it the one day a week
   S- Mhm. And I have other forms of exercise that I fit in on other days, so my goal, purely from a physical standpoint, is to have a small variety of things that I like to do, and to do them regularly. So I feel that if I get the hour and a half or 2 hours – it's not really 2 hours- um on Sunday, with tc, that's just part of the whole week of what I set out for myself.
   INT-Ok. So tc is just one of the elements /S-yeah/ INT-within kind of a – what you've got it like a physical activity program where you have walking /S- I have walking and swimming" [4.1.371-378]

2. (TC is) just so important to my week, that I will accommodate it

   "...there certainly are times when I've said 'Hm, don't want to be there today'. But it's just so important to my week, that I will accommodate it, even though sometimes it's awkward, and I try not to miss any more Sunday afternoons than I have to, you know. So it's a commitment, like anything else, you know, you're gonna swim twice a week, or gonna make sure you walk every morning or you're gonna lift weights 3 times a week – everyone will tell you, that they have to push themselves into it every once in awhile. But the benefit is there." [4.1.269-274]

3. I know what takes me there is that I do enjoy it
   "... I can come to the tc class some days, feeling grouchy, feeling tired, feeling 'oh I've got too much to do, I probably shouldn't be here', or, 'Ugh, I'm not in the frame of mind to do this today, why the heck did I come?', um, but I know what takes me there is that I do enjoy it..." [4.2.60-63]

INT- ...if, for example, this class was not available anymore, where do you think you'd go with the tc? What would you do?

S- ...I think I would want to find another group, simply because I do find it so enjoyable and so beneficial.

3.1) (TC leader) makes it enjoyable
3.2) (TC leader) does not place an overly high demand on the group of students

> "...(the TC leader) does not place an overly high demand on the group of students, he makes it enjoyable, you know, those are important things." [4.2.95-96]

4. The tone of this group is very good
    4.1) (the TC master) is a very personable individual, as a leader
    4.2) The other helpers are very personable individuals
    4.3) There's a camaraderie
    4.4) There's a helpfulness
    4.5) No one there doing any sort of um, judging or putting you down
    4.6) We can use that word 'community' if you like
    4.7) We have fun

> INT-...it sounds to me like you're quite busy and so, um, in your whole week really, and so the fact that you are able to make that commitment to get there every Sunday for a couple of hours
> S- Mhm, barring the weeks that I lost with my back problem and so on, earlier in the year. But yeah, it's just important to be there. The other thing about this group- and I think this is important for any um, group activity that you join- is that the tone of this group is very good. Um, (the TC master) is a very personable individual, as a leader. And so are the other helpers, yourself included, you know, there's a nice feel there. Um, there's a camaraderie, there's a helpfulness, there's no one there doing any sort of um, judging or putting you down, you know, there's none of that in that group. And that hasn't been my experience in groups. And I know as a – one of the reasons why we did drop out of the other group years ago, was there was a leader there who was, you know, too busy trying to deal with his own stuff and then projected it onto, onto our group. So that, coming into this group has been very enjoyable and, if you like the group you'll go back, you know, it's the same within – I mean, we can use that word 'community' if you like. There needs to be something there that appeals to you, that makes you – that draws you back, that makes you look forward to the activity each week, and that is present in the Sunday afternoon group. So that, that's a big piece of, of what attracts me as well as, just learning the tc and doing the tc. And I'm a slow learner, I'm not very good at retaining all those steps! [laughs]
> INT- Oh I don't know, you seem to learn pretty quickly to me!
> S- Oh, I'm following everybody else! [laughs]
> INT- So you find this group particularly supportive
> S- Yeah and there's a nice tone there, you know, and we have fun, you know." [4.1.276-298]

4.8) There's a conviviality (in the tc group)

INT- ...if, for example, this class was not available anymore, where do you think you'd go with the tc? What would you do?

S- ...I think I would want to find another group, simply because I do find it so enjoyable and so beneficial. And I would look around and try different groups and find the one that was right for me. From the standpoint of learning the set and then, maybe even more importantly, do I like the group, is it a compatible group. Because this Sunday afternoon group has just been wonderful in that respect. There's a conviviality there and uh Mr. C____ does not place an overly high demand on the group of students, he makes it enjoyable, you know, those are important things.

INT- Ok, yeah you had mentioned that actually, the tone of the group /S-yeah /INT- was something that you found really attractive with this class

S- Yeah, yeah, absolutely. And that's sustained, you know, I've been there for 5 years and it's still there, it hasn't changed terribly, you know, so that that's very significant I think, you know, that's a credit to the people who are running the show, and I've said that before too. [laughs] [4.2.90-102]

5. The benefit is always there
    - 5.1) I do come out with that improved sense of well-being
    - 5.2) I feel good when I've finished

S- ... I can come to the tc class some days, feeling grouchy, feeling tired, feeling 'oh I've got too much to do, I probably shouldn't be here', or, 'Ugh, I'm not in the frame of mind to do this today, why the heck did I come?', um, but I know what takes me there is that I do enjoy it, and I do come out with that improved sense of well-being. And it takes a little push sometimes, but the benefit is always there. So that's...that's how I would describe it.

INT- Right. Ok. So you find that knowing that your um, that you're gonna feel better when you're done /S- mhm /INT- that's enough /S-Yes /INT- to draw you

S- Oh yes, oh definitely. And I would add to that by saying – and I said this in the last interview also – is that the forms of exercise that I do are the ones that I know I'm going to enjoy. You wouldn't get me in an aerobics class in a month of Sundays, you know, and just– that to me is not attractive at all. But, I know the benefits of tc, so – and I know that a certain amount of physical exercise per week is a, is important for one's overall health, um, so, I'll come to tc. [laughs] That sort of puts it in a nutshell.

INT- Yeah, Ok. From both a, sort of a health practitioner perspective where you know you need to get some exercise /S-yeah /INT- but also because you know that these are the ones you really /S-that I like and I enjoy /INT- Ok

S- and I feel good when I've finished [4.2.60-77]

"...the benefit is there." [4.1.275]

Sally
Paraphrase List: Lived Experience

1. I'm concentrating on the set and what's the next move

> "...I'm concentrating on what I'm doing, and certainly I think in tc you have to do that otherwise you will forget where you are and you make the wrong move and we all do that. Um, so there's a certain concentration that I'm also very aware of as I'm doing tc..." [4.2.26-28]
>
> "...I think about what I'm doing, um, there's certainly some degree of concentration on the set and what's the next move..." [4.2.24249-250]

2. In doing the (TC) set I'm very aware of what my physical body is doing

> INT- Do you notice anything right at the point when you're actually involved in practising, as far as um thoughts that go through your mind? What do you think about, if anything?
> S- Hmm, I think about what I'm doing, um, there's certainly some degree of concentration on the set and what's the next move, and I think about my body mechanics quite a bit. Um...I'm very aware of the no-no's, the things that can – that you can do incorrectly that will-can be detrimental to body mechanics. It's something that I've always been aware of, that for years and years and years have been conscious of – I think it's a by-product of the occupational hazards of being a nurse and getting into mechanical difficulties like, lower back problems and so on. So it comes out of that basis. But I also think that I keep very aware of it for the simple reason that if you do the movements properly they feel better and you again set up that lovely rhythm as you move from one movement to the next. Um, coming back to physical problems, after injuring my back almost a year ago now, I'm far more aware of my stance when I'm doing tc, and particularly about keeping my abdominal muscles tightened up so that I don't come home with a lot of back spasm, and I can, sometimes, you know. So those things I think about quite a bit, and I'm quite disciplined about that. [4.2.246-262]
>
> "... in doing the set, I'm very aware of what my physical body is doing [4.3.204-205]

3. There is an energy flow associated with doing TC

> "There's a flow of energy associated with doing tc..." [4.1.63]

3.1) It can be within, but it's around you as well, whether you're doing (TC) individually or in a group

> "...it (energy flow) can be within, but it's around you as well, whether you're doing (TC) individually or in a group." [4.2.211-212]

3.2) I can feel a sense of rhythm and flow to (my) body as (I'm) doing tc - your body feels as though it's part of that flow

INT- So today I just wanted to explore a little bit more about some of the actual sensations that you get when you practise tc...

S- ...I think there is a sense of rhythm to your body, as you're doing tc because it is a set of movements and one movement flows into another so there's a sense of flow and a sense of rhythm, I think that I, I like very much, and certainly can feel... [4.2.15-18]

"...you've learned it [a tc set] well enough that you can with some confidence, go through the movements of the set without necessarily looking at your neighbour for a cue every time you move an arm or a leg, you know, so that it's more of a flow and your body feels as though it's part of that flow...Um, and then it probably goes a little bit farther than that because there's a bi – then you get into what's a bit more of the straight physical to the concentration that you know that you feel while you are doing the set, and then maybe that gets you moved into the meditative space too' [4.3.156-159; 161-165]

3.3) When you're doing tc sets in the group that has learned a full set and is doing it well – you can also feel that interchange of energy within the group

"...when you're working with a group and doing tc sets in the group, and – I'm talking about a group that has learned a full set and is doing it well and feeling comfortable with it – you can also feel that interchange of energy within the group that are doing the set together. Well, that's not physical, there's something more to that, and I've used this mental-emotional-spiritual – I've used that term a lot, but I think there's a mind-body-spirit um, component to tc and you can feel that in the group, when you're working in a group." [4.1.80-86]

3.4) Just the physical fact that you're all moving at the same time - you can really see the rhythm of the movements

3.5) There is a flow that I think I just want to call connectedness with other people

INT- You had also...mentioned a number of times, the word 'flow' – the flow of movement when you do tc or when you watch it, the flow of energy inside your body. Can you tell me a little bit more about what you mean by that – are you talking about the same thing when you use it in both contexts, or are you talking about something different?

S- No, I think I'm putting the 2 of them together. Um, you know, um...consider if we're standing on the sidelines now, at the Multicultural Centre and we're just watching a group of people doing the Simple TC set for example. And they know it well so they can do it well together, and you can, you can really see the rhythm of the movements of that group of people. So there is that external, physical, observational kind of stuff that goes on. Now, put yourself into that tc group and you're part of this group doing these movements and so on, and there's something else that enters in there, um, there's the very – just the physical fact that your both, all moving at the same time, say there're 25 of us. But, within that, there is a flow that I think I just want to call connectedness, you know, that kind of thing. So, there, among the group of people- but it's also coming from somewhere, so it's going back somewhere, and I think that's where it's coming back into the individual, because, to quote one of the nursing articles I've been reading recently, 'you set an environment with, between yourself and the 'other'' now the 'other' might be that 25 people or it might just be the 2 of us sitting here, but there is going to be a flow of energy from inside me to inside that person and back again. So, if you embody that, there is the lovely, slow movement of the tc movements, the set...that physical part of it, and then the connectedness with other people as doing part of that. Now that's a group effort. Now what if you're doing tc on your own, which I've stated many times I don't do very often, but sometimes, I do, believe it or not! And I don't know how to explain that flow, other than on more than one occasion I've heard...(another practitioner) say, that if she's practising tc in her basement room or her living area, wherever she does it – at home anyway, that her cats will just come and be part of that. So even as an individual doing tc, and I've noticed this too, one of our cats will just come and park right at my feet, so there's got to be something going on, you know, some –and I have to call it energy flow, I don't know what other words to use – um that gets to the cat, so there's the connection with the cat as well. So it can be within, but it's around you as well, whether you're doing it individually or in a group. [4.2.182-212]

4. When you know the (TC) set well you can go inside (yourself) and do some of the meditative stuff

"...I think that the idea of an energy flow within the body, an energy flow around the body, fits with the way you do the movements of tc, and how you...allow yourself, when you know the set well, to, not necessarily be totally with the physical, but you can go inside and be – and do some of the meditative stuff that goes with that as well." [4.1.69-74]

4.1) I can do the (TC) set and I lose the room - move into that meditative or spiritual space
4.2) There's no need for you to say to yourself, 'now what do I do next?' - the movements just come

"I can do uh the Simple set um, and just – I lose the room. I just do it and it feels quite lovely." [4.3.171-172]

S- Now, the goal is to get to this wonderful spot, with everything that you know, so that you can just move with the set and forget the room as I said, you know, that, that would be great [laughs]
INT- Ok. You said 'lose the room'
S- Well, a moment ago I said, um, 'move into that meditative space'. So that's what I mean. Um, you are and you aren't in the room, you know, I – we, within the first interview I talked about being part of the rhythm of the group and the energy that flows with the group. And, certainly, that's part of what I'm talking about, that that feeling of you're all doing the same thing at the same time, you know, everything that goes with that. But at the same time there's no need for you to say to yourself, 'now what do I do next?' You know what to do next, the movements just come, with some nice even flow to them and you know what you're doing. So you can be, certainly be aware of the group that you're working with, but you can also be in some kind of um meditative space,

> or perhaps another way to say it is some sort of spiritual space, you can in some way allow that part of your being to be nourished by the tc. [4.3.171-190]

4.3) With concentration (on TC) comes a detachment from the immediate environment, from other things that might have been crowding your mind before you got to the tc class
4.4) Detachment allows you to stay with TC in physical, mental, and spiritual state
4.5) I can achieve that state to a greater or lesser extent, depending on what's going on in my life
4.6) (When) the advanced students do the whole set- that's when I can feel (that state of detachment)

> "...as you move through a set and you, you um begin to associate with that that rhythm and that flow, I find I can also, I can do 2 things: I'm concentrating on what I'm doing, and certainly I think in tc you have to do that otherwise you will forget where you are and you make the wrong move and we all do that. Um, so there's a certain concentration that I'm also very aware of as I'm doing tc, and that too I will call 'discipline' except it's a mental discipline as opposed to a physical one that I mentioned a moment ago. Um, but with that comes some sense of detachment...I hesitate to use the word 'meditation' because I think that takes you into a a different space somehow, but I do think that there is, with the concentration comes a detachment from the, uh, well the immediate environment, not necessarily the group, because you are part of the energy of the group, um, and maybe it's a detachment from other things that might have been crowding your mind before you got to the tc class, such as 'I must remember to go to Safeway on my way home and buy milk', to, one of your kids who, with whom you had a conversation on the phone and you know is struggling with something or other, and you're carrying that kind of problem issue around in your head, so that that the detachment,, I think, puts those things aside for awhile, and allows you just to stay with the tc, both in physical and mental state, and then I guess you'd say, a spiritual state, because I think that's what that detachment is, is sort of – you've got the the body-mind-spirit kind of component with that. That sensation or the completeness of that is variable, from one session of tc to the other, and as we talked about last time, I'm not a practiser through the week, in between the classes, I tend to just do tc at the class. So um, from one given Sunday afternoon to the next given Sunday afternoon I can achieve that state to a greater or lesser extent, depending on what's going on in my life, I think, you know. Or maybe just the nature of the class that day, maybe there are more distractions, maybe it's broken up a little bit differently. But when, particularly when you're doing a whole set – practising segments of it, that's different because you know you're going to chop and change all the way along – but when you're doing a whole set, um - the best way to say that is when the beginning students are separated off from the more advanced students in that class and then the advanced students do the whole set- that's when I can feel what I have just described now." [4.2.24-52]

4.7) I think I'm pretty tuned in to the real world, the room, the people, the clock and so on, so I never quite lose my, my sense of attachment to those things

INT-...When you were describing a little bit about your experience when you do practise, you mentioned about that sense of detachment...do you notice things about...how you experience...the passage of time or the space around you as you're doing...tc?

S- ...I think I'm pretty tuned in to the real world, the room, the people, the clock and so on, so I never quite lose my, my sense of attachment to those things...I think I stay attached to the clock, I'm too Type A not to do that [laughs]. [4.2.227-233; 239]

5. We finish the set and you bring your hands down to the side and it's a peaceful, quiet moment. - as though you're wrapped up in a nice warm blanket

5.1) The sense of just having a more even balance of energy within my body is there
5.2) The centeredness, the grounded feeling is there
5.3) A sense of peace, of well-being is there

"...I know on the occasions that I have (practised TC on my own)...um, the sense of just having a more even balance of energy within my body is there, the centeredness that I talked about, the grounded feeling is there, um, a sense of peace, a sense of well-being. We finish the set and you bring your hands down to the side and it's a lovely, quiet moment. You know you're going to start off and do whatever else you have to do for the rest of the day, but um, and another way to describe it is as though you're wrapped up in a nice warm blanket, just for a moment before you throw it off and go on with your day, you know [laughs], but that's, those are all images I guess of saying, that's what I mean by flow of energy, you know, yeah." [4.2.214-222]

"...and I have the same sensation when I um, when I'm doing the set with the group and that is that there's a cloaking or a warm comfortable feeling when you finish the set – just, just those few seconds of 'oh, isn't this great, this is soo peaceful'. And it doesn't last particularly, because you move on and do whatever, but, but that certainly is there." [4.2.235-238]

"...peaceful is being, feeling balanced and quiet inside" [4.3.276-277]

5.4) What I feel, is that internal sense of bringing in something peaceful
5.5) It also has a component of feeling quiet - the chatter is gone
5.6) To me that's far more than physical, you're really paying attention to the inner self

"...when you bring yourself back to the neutral position [demonstrates]- and as you and I know, there's some – with each of the sets that we learn, you bring your hands in, sometimes you cross them and then bring them out, and down, or you bring them in like this and turn them over and then straighten your arms out so that they're at shoulder level and then you bring them down to your side. There's...a wonderful..settled feeling, or peaceful feeling, that you can let yourself have, as you start to slowly bring your hands down from eye level or shoulder level, and bring them down slowly until they're resting at the sides of your body....and, for me, what I feel, is that internal sense of bringing in something peaceful – we ca n call it something spiritual –

> peaceful's a better word I think, because again it has a settled feeling for my physical body, but it also has a component of...feeling quiet, no chatter, the chatter is gone, you know, so that you can just be in your own centre, and to me that's far more than physical, you're really paying attention to the inner self. So that's the spiritual piece of that, you know." [4.1.140-141, 145-159]

6. (When I'm doing a set I don't know as well) physically, I think I tighten up
    - 6.1) I feel my shoulders tighten, and I feel my lower back tighten
    - 6.2) I notice that my coordination may be off a little bit
    - 6.3) I don't keep my balance as well
    - 6.4) You run a big risk of being hard on yourself at that time

7. (With a set you know well) even if you do make a mistake you know you don't belabour it

> "Oh, yeah, physically, I think I tighten up, you know, and so I feel my shoulders tighten, and I feel my um lower back tighten, and then I notice that my coordination may be off a little bit, not a whole lot, but a little bit. And I don't keep my balance as well." [4.3.212-214]

> "...you run a big risk – and a lot of us will do this – and certainly I do – of being hard on yourself at that time and say 'Oh, for goodness sakes you should be practising more' or ' For goodness sakes you should know that, you've done it a hundred thousand times'. That doesn't help your integration of mind-body-spirit either. It also doesn't help you to learn it any better" [4.3.222-226]

> "...even if you do make a mistake when you feel more integrated, you just say ' uhh' and carry on, you know you don't belabour it. [4.3.234-235]

Sally
Paraphrase List: Perceived Outcomes

1. You do benefit from TC, physically, and mentally and emotionally
   - *You need to try (TC) in order to see that benefit*

   "You need to try it in order to see that benefit, but' I would put some emphasis on the fact that you do benefit from it, physically, and mentally and emotionally." [4.2.329-330]

2. There's a physical form of energy that is in a better state, because of the tc

3. I know that (TC) has improved my fitness and continues to do that
   I notice benefit in my muscles
   - *TC's good for muscle toning*

   I notice benefit in my circulation
   - *TC's good for increasing vascular capacity*

   I just feel better after I've done the set
   I notice benefit in my tolerance for climbing stairs and other uh graded – like a mountain
   - *Surprised myself one day by being able to walk up all the wooden stairs from the parking lot on – beside Grierson Hill*

   "I'd say 'I notice benefit in my muscles, I notice benefit in my circulation, I notice benefit in my tolerance for climbing stairs and other uh graded – like a mountain, and I just feel better after I've done the set. " [4.2.331-333]

   S- Well I think my physical fitness is improved. And I noticed this years ago before I was doing this style of tc I was doing the Taoist tc, surprised myself one day by being able to walk up all the wooden stairs from the parking lot on – beside Grierson Hill to the conference centre, the Shaw Conference centre, and that's quite a hike
   INT- That's a long way
   S- And I just went boomdittyboomdittyboom and no problem at all. So that's certainly one – I fit the tc into part of my fitness and I know that it has improved my fitness and continues to do that [4.3.17-25]

   - *(TC's) as good as any other form of aerobics and so on in terms of muscle tone and improved circulation, and ability climb up mountains to go hiking or flights of stairs from the bottom of the river valley to the top, just to use those as examples*

   INT- ...I wanted to just find out from you a little bit more about how you see the concept of energy within the person, and how that relates to tc....
   S- ...I think tc, allows that energy to flow in the individual, the set, the sequence of movements, one flowing into another, that overall rhythm and flow that I mentioned a few moments ago, are the vehicles for allowing energy within the body to balance again, to flow more evenly. If you want to look at that from a purely physical, even clinical, point of view, um, when you're practising tc on a regular basis, it's as good as any other form of

aerobics and so on, in terms of muscle tone and improved circulation, and ability climb up mountains to go hiking or flights of stairs from the bottom of the river valley to the top, just to use those as examples. So there's there's a physical form of energy that is in a better state, because of the tc. [4.2.116-124]

"...the tc set does that, it's good for muscle toning, it's good for increasing vascular capacity... [4.1.120-121]

4. The TC set just enhances that (feeling centered, grounded, peaceful, self-confident [mental/emotional]

S- ... that whole thing you can do very quickly and very easily at the beginning of a tc set, because we do, we start off in that um neutral posture, so, ground yourself, center yourself, and then, the movements of the tc set begin. So you've already got some of that balance. And the tc set just enhances that.
INT- Ok.
S- That's what I feel
INT- Right, ok. And then, kind of one of the end products out of that is that you you feel centered and grounded still or more so?
S- More so, mhm...
INT- OK, right. And also, sort of a third product out of that is, is that peaceful feeling, cause you mention that lovely quiet moment
S- Mhm, mhm, mhm....[4.3.300-308; 313-315]

4.1) After an hour's worth of TC, I know that I feel more centered and rejuvenated

- *Centering means being still, quieting the chatter that's around you and in you – um, and the chatter isn't necessarily a group of people in the room, but just the buzz that you've got around you from, say, what you've come from before you came to this point, or uh, the problems of the day*

"After an hour's worth of tc, I know that I feel more centered, I know that everything feels more relaxed, I know that my eyes feel brighter. Well, that isn't entirely physical, there's a mental-emotional-spiritual component to that as well." [4.1.78-80]

"...centering means being still, quieting the chatter that's around you and in you – um, and the chatter isn't necessarily a group of people in the room, but just the buzz that you've got around you from, say, what you've come from before you came to this point, or uh, the problems of the day, and you try to quiet that kind of thing. And at the same time, in a visual way, go inside, and for me this is a process of just trying to draw energy into my heart area." [4.1.99-104]

4.2) The sense of just having a more even balance of energy within my body is there
4.3) The grounded feeling is there
4.4) A sense of peace (is there)

"...I know on the occasions that I have (practised TC on my own)...um, the sense of just having a more even balance of energy within my body is there, the centeredness that I talked about, the grounded feeling is there, um, a sense of peace, a sense of well-being." [9.2.214-217]

- *grounding means having your feet on the floor, or the ground, and being aware that you have a solid place, that you feel the soles of your feet.*

"...grounding means having your feet on the floor, or the ground, and being aware that you have a solid place, that you feel the soles of your feet. And usually to do that, you have your feet about shoulder width apart. Now that goes with the positioning that you take when you start out a tc set. So it's having – in our modern language, it's having neutral posture, really, and if you have the neutral posture with the, uh, soles of your feet, your hips, shoulders all lined up, and then letting your shoulders relax and a tiny bit of a bend in your knees and a tiny little bend in your hips, then you can also center and you can also feel grounded because you feel solid, you feel a connection with the earth..." [4.1.109-117]

4.5)My eyes feel brighter

"After an hour's worth of tc,...I know that my eyes feel brighter. Well, that isn't entirely physical, there's a mental-emotional-spiritual component to that as well." [4.1.78-80]

4.6)Sense of well-being is improved

S- ...when you're doing a whole set, um...That's when I take away, that's what gives me some sense of um, rejuvenation, sense of well-being is improved, you know in my work with palliative care we like to know what the individual's sense of well-being is so we say 'SWB' and stick this on the chart, you know [laughs]
INT- Right
S- So my SWB goes up [laughs] – it's, it's better. On a zero to ten scale, zero being the best, it's probably at zero, rather than being somewhere further along that line, you know. [4.2.49,50, 52-58]

- *Improv(es) your ability to put thoughts together*

S- But then let's go a little bit deeper and talk about mental health and spiritual well-being, and in terms of energy flow in the body, the tc has that benefit also of just, um, improving your ability to put thoughts together, improve – I use the word 'sense of well-being' which has a very – that's an umbrella term, you know. So I think that embodies the mind, emotion – the mind, the emotions, and the spiritual component of the person. And um, the tc movements, the rhythmic – the rhythm, the flow, the energy generated by that, I think is what benefits these inner things for the individual.
INT- And that – are you talking about for you, as an individual?
S- Yes. I kept that very third person, but yeah, for me, indeed. [4.2.124-132]

"...a sense of peace, a sense of well-being (is there)." [9.2.217]

4.7) You want to feel, put together well, when your finished. TC does that

> "...I think in energy work, that's what you're trying to achieve, is comfort, you know, you don't want to be jangled, you want to feel, put together well, when you're finished. Tc does that." [4.2.224-226]

4.8) Everything feels more relaxed

> "After an hour's worth of tc,...I know that everything feels more relaxed..." [4.1.78-79]

4.9) You feel more alert
4.10) You have more energy
4.11) When (I've) done a tc set my problems are not quite as burdensome

> INT- ...You also mentioned that after you practise tc, you said that your eyes feel bright....
>
> S- Well, I think that's because you improve circulation to a certain extent. Um, the tc set does that, it's good for muscle toning, it's good for increasing vascular capacity, and if you are tired maybe, or just carrying a big load of stuff around [motions to head] – the problems you're trying to sort out, I think your vision is also affected in the sense that your circulation maybe isn't quite as good as it could be. Um, so that's the physical part of it. But I also think when you've done a tc set that you do clear out some of that stuff, you get rid of the things that have been a burden on your shoulders, and - those problems are still there and you're still gonna have to go back and face them tomorrow morning and all that stuff, but- somehow or other you just let go of a layer of stuff, and in so doing, you brighten everything up, and that maybe slightly foggy feeling that your eyes had as part of that, disappears, and you just, feel centered, you feel more alert, you feel, you have more energy. Um, yeah my problems are there but I can sort them out – they're not quite as burdensome. So that would be a mental-emotional piece that goes with that type of thing.
>
> INT- So when you're describing that you're talking about, not only the physical aspect /S-No, I'm talking about /INT-of seeing /S-Yeah, I'm talking about mental-emotional stuff /INT-Yeah, yeah, ok, right
>
> S- Cause you can't separate those out, you know? That's a very fuzzy line there, and it's forever changing." [4.1.118-137]

- ***I can come in with a number of things on my mind. But I do find, that over even the first half of the 2 hours (of TC practise) I let go of those fairly quickly***

INT- How about things that go through your head at the time – you mentioned that sometimes you come in with, with a lot going on /S-and the jangle of the world, eh?...

S- Um, I can come in with a number of things on my mind, depending on the day, and I know that I'm, I'm thinking about them when I first start off. But I do find, that over, say, even that, even the first half of the 2 hours, you know where we're doing the practising and so on...I let go of those fairly quickly. I think that's a good thing. And I'm just there, you know, the time capsule sort of thing 'this is this 2 hours and this is what we will do for this

2 hours and I know I'm gonna feel good when I leave, and those other issues are there but they'll just have to wait'. So I do some of that as well.

INT- Just sort of putting things aside /S-putting things aside, yeah [4.2.245-246; 262-269]...And then of course, we just get socializing a little bit, and that helps to distract you from what baggage you might have brought in [laughs].[2.4.272-274]

5. (TC) provided me with a better foundation of self-confidence

5.1) You bring your self-confidence back into line

"...[tc] certainly provided me with a better foundation, shall we say, of self-confidence." [4.3.28-29]

"Mhm, mhm. And you feel more solid. You bring your self-confidence back into line, all that stuff." [4.2.180-181]

S- ... I think the outcome of feeling more centered, of feeling more peaceful, is that you enhance your self confidence [4.3.327-328]

6. Doing tc helped to raise some emotional things and bring things into focus that I might have otherwise have just held and buried underneath [mental/emotional]

"INT-... when you started to do it [tc] yourself, were there any surprises for you?

S- Well, I can say yes, but I also have to couch that in what was going on in my life at the time. My mother was ill, and-died in 1989- and we were doing this tc over the time that she was ill and died, and I think that the thing that surprised me first, and then I, you know I sort of realized what was happening – is that it brought out a lot of emotional stuff related to the fact that she was dying, and maybe some of the unfinished business that one sometimes has with a parent, and I certainly had some of that. And I found some evenings when I was doing tc, that I was extremely tired, and was eventually able to identify this as, the emotional baggage I was carrying, and that doing the tc set brought some of this to the surface. So, you wonder why you're so fatigued, but you can, in retrospect, realize that you're dealing with some of your grief, and I was dealing with some unfinished business, some of which made me angry, and I think that the act of doing tc and getting energy flowing in my body, helped to raise some of the stuff from – that I might have otherwise have just held and buried underneath. I'm also an advocate of the idea that we hold our emotional pain in our physical bodies, and that we can have sore lower backs or constant headaches, or tight shoulders, because we carry some of that kind of burden. And I think the tc started to bring some of that out – now that was, that was new stuff to me at the time....

So if I come back to the point about the – any surprises with the tc, I was surprised to feel as fatigued as I was, I was surprised to feel as much anger as I did, but I now realize in retrospect, with all the other experiences that I've had, that this is precisely what I was doing, was raising some of my sadness and my anger related to death of a parent." [4.1.202-219, 238-241]

6.1) Muscles are released because you've been holding them and you know there's some emotional holding there and the act of physical exercise helps to release some of that

6.2) If there is an ‘issue’ you may gain some insight

INT- When we talked a bit last time, about unexpected sensations or uh results from tc, doing tc, you had mentioned basically about some emotional releases that you had /S- mhm / INT- or what I’ll term as that /S-mhm /INT- And, I guess, in the end – I’m assuming, from what I heard you say, that you felt that was a positive thing – but I don’t want to put words in your mouth /S-mhm /INT- so, did you see that /S- as a positive /INT- as a positive thing?
S- Absolutely. Oh yeah, oh yeah, for sure. And I think some of what we’ve just chatted about *now* fits in with that picture as well, you know, the ability to put aside some things. And, but it can raise some things and bring things into focus, that maybe you had buried down in here somewhere for awhile, or muscles are released because you’ve been holding them and you know there’s some emotional holding there and the act of physical exercise helps to release some of that. And then I think in the process of that, if there is a, an ‘issue’, we’ll just call it that, quotation marks around it, um, you may gain some insight, you know, ‘maybe *that’s* what’s been bothering me’, ‘Oh, *that’s* what he was *really* saying, oh I must go back and check that out tomorrow’, that kind of thing [4.2.280-294]

7. (TC) opened me to look at the whole person and the various ways in which we try to remain balanced and healthy

INT- Right, ok. [pauses] You had said that um tc has in some way, has been a contributor towards this growth of um, a more holistic view maybe that you’ve had. Have you been able to – can you tell me what it is about tc for you that has shed some light on this for you? Is there something specific?
S- No, it’s not something that you could spell out in a concrete specific fashion [pause]. I used the word ‘openness’ a moment ago. It’s *opened* me to look at the whole person and the various ways in which we try to remain balanced and healthy. I think that’s that’s the best way to say it. It’s not something I can put in a box at all, you know. [4.3.53-60]

8. TC has provided one component of strengthening the connection with my spiritual self [Spiritual]

“And then I think I feel some strengthening of connection with my spiritual self, and I know that one does this in a variety of ways, but I think the tc has provided one component of that.” [4.3.29-31]

8.1) I see tc as a facilitator, a part of what helped me, rather than thinking of a god in the framework of Christian doctrine, to think more in terms of a spiritual presence and a spiritual presence within the individual, that transcends those doctrines

INT- Do you see any complement or clashing of approaches between your tc and your actual religion? Or do see them as completely separate entities?
S- I think initially when I introduced myself to tc I probably saw them as separate things. And that goes back to that 1987 date that we’ve discussed before. But we’re now 14 years later and if you look at that as a continuum, again, my own personal growth has gone from viewing my religion as strictly something that was structured and practised with um a specific doctrine to focus on, to being one of a creator and human beings as part of the world that the creator has made, and the spiritual component of – of everything....But I can

remember saying to our parish priest, um, somewhere in the early 90s, 'There's more, there's got to be more' and we were talking about Christianity at that point, and we were talking about the bible as we know it today and interpretation of scripture and what this means in your daily life and so on. And then I would look at him and say 'but there's more' and I couldn't say what the 'more' is. In a variety of ways, I think I now define – shall I say a variety of ways? No, I shall say, I've had a variety of different experiences that have helped me at least conceptualize in my mind what the 'more' is. Um, and tc is one of those experiences. So I think that I now, rather than thinking of a god in the framework of Christian doctrine, am more likely to think of a god or a creator or the presence of the holy – these are words that I like – um as being a more um – I don't want to say global, that's not right – but a more all-embracing um idea for me that yes we can define it in terms of a specific religion, you know, Islam, Judaism, Christianity, and we can go on and on, but I think that I now feel that I'm kind of outside the framework of what I grew up with in specific terms, and think more in terms of a spiritual presence and a spiritual presence within the individual, that transcends those doctrines. And, I see tc as part of what helped me to do that....

INT- ...2 ideas that I got from that is 1) you see religion not as just um just the doctrines and following that, but you see it as a much broader sort of thing now

S- Yeah

INT- And you felt that tc not only is a part of that, but it's been can we say sort of like a tool to help you get there?

S- Yes. A facilitator

5.7) TC has contributed to who I am and how I view my fellow man and the world

"Because if you view the journey of your life, shall we say, and you view the tc as part of that journey, I was probably going along this path anyway, you know, with respect to just who I am and how I view my fellow man and the world and so on. Um, but the tc has facilitated some of that, has opened up more realization of that path, and provided an opportunity for some of the growth that I probably wanted to do anyway. And the tc has contributed to that." [4.3.35-40]

Ben
Paraphrase List: TC Initiation

"Well I was thinking uh, even before, you should get into some kind of an exercise eh, us being older and that eh, this running and jogging I don't care too much for that, I don't think it's very good practise anyway, running, it's hard on the feet and the cement and on your body eh, so. And we weren't doing too much for activity at all, at that particular time, which is about uh 4 or 5 years ago, even before that eh, we weren't doing very much – I mean we walked, you know, around the block or, 20 minute walks but uh, after us getting older, we should get into something other than walking, eh, and we didn't wanna run." [6.1.70-77]

1. I was thinking 'you should get into some kind of an exercise' - we weren't doing too much for activity at all

"Well I was thinking uh, even before, 'you should get into some kind of an exercise' eh, us being older and that eh..." [6.1.70-__]

"And we weren't doing too much for activity at all, at that particular time, which is about uh 4 or 5 years ago, even before that eh, we weren't doing very much – I mean we walked, you know, around the block or, 20 minute walks but uh, after us getting older, we should get into something other than walking, eh..." [6.1.__-77]

1.1) We walked but we should get into something other than walking

1.2) We didn't want to run – it's hard on the feet and on your body

"...this running and jogging I don't care too much for that, I don't think it's very good practise anyway, running, it's hard on the feet and the cement and on your body eh, so."

"...we didn't wanna run."

1.3) I had always wanted to take martial arts

"...I had always wanted to take martial arts of some sort eh – I was thinking along that line, of taking something like tc. I'd heard of it, but I didn't really understand or know what it was really about, eh. " [6.1.78; 81-83]

1.4) Slow martial art would be ideal- older people can't take kung fu because it's kinda strenuous

"...I figured the slow one [martial art] would be the ideal one because uh, like uh older people can't take kung fu eh because it's kinda strenuous on their system and stuff so we have to think of something along that – I was thinking along that line, of taking something like tc" [6.1.79-81]

2. The doctor said (to my wife) 'take this tc'

"(my wife) went to the doctor and she had troubles, and uh, he said take this tc eh" [6.1.77-78]

3. The ad caught my eye

"I had the Examiner eh, and I knew for a fact the Examiner had uh classes going on, in various things like dancing, and fencing and stuff like that. And the ad caught my eye on this tc held at Multicultural Centre." [6.1.85-87]

4. The fee was pretty good

- "And the fee was uh, pretty good – I didn't know too much about fees then, I didn't know about classes either, different classes, but I figured, 'well, let's try this one'." [6.1.87-89]

Ben

Paraphrase List: TC Continuation

INT-Ok. So, what would you say it is that keeps you going to this tc group every week, even though, well you're obviously busy and you work shifts and everything else, what is it that keeps you coming back?

B- Well, besides the people that we know there, uh, I guess it's uh, the exercise, it would have to be the exercise, you know, because you know, now – we don't do any exercise at all, Kay, and uh, some Sundays I do want to miss, you know, but uh, that's far and in between. I like going there, I like doin the tc moves, and I find it's uh relaxing – I feel good after I leave, Kay. So that's what keeps me goin' there. [6.1.274-281]

1. I was very enthusiastic on practising (TC) cause I wanted to get knowledge of the steps

   "I was very enthusiastic on practising cause I wanted to get, I wanted to get knowledge of the steps" [6.1.6-7]

2. I found, for myself that if I come home and I practised the (TC) moves that we learned that day, it was more beneficial than if I didn't practise them
3. I didn't want to miss these (TC) classes, because to miss these classes I'd be behind

   "...I find, for myself, if I missed a class, I mean I missed a practise at home, you know, immediately after I had class, I'd have a heck of a time trying to think of what those moves were. So I found, for myself that if I come home and I practised the moves that we learned that day, it was more beneficial than if I didn't practise them cause then next week I'd have to kinda go back and rely on the old steps we did the day before. And then I get myself into hot water cause then, you know, cause you forget these steps, you get all anxious and excited, and you figure 'ooh, this is not the thing to do' eh, because uh [pause] let me see how I should put it [pause] with practise, you know, it's a lot easier to learn the steps eh, than if you don't practise, then you kinda run yourself into hot water and it's uh, harder to do the steps and everything like that." [6.1.7-17]

   "...knowing if I practised immediately after I learned the steps, was a whole lot beneficial than just, you know, waiting a couple of hours, because, I have a tendency of forgetting eh, and if I don't review it, like whatever, then I get myself into hot water and it's a lot more work for my part, for doing these moves" [6.1.19-22]

   "...if I fail to do that [practise right after class and just about everyday] eh, I'd uh, I'd lose my concentration and my steps, and then I'd uh, well then I'd have to put it off and say 'well I'll have to wait until next class', you know, to review the thing and then, as time goes on, you know, with every class, if you don't practise right after, you know, you get way more behind, and then it's a little harder to learn eh, then you get kinda discouraged" [6.1.27-32]

   "...you get scared if you get called up to do it in front of people, like 'Oohh, I –" [6.1.34]

"...it's more beneficial that I practised right after class then uh, letting it go" [6.1.36]

"...I didn't want to miss these classes, because if I, like I said before earlier, that to miss these classes I'd be behind, and uh, me being a slowpoke at some of these uh, moves we're learning, they take me, give me a harder time to catch up eh" [6.1.62-65]

4. I like going (to do TC)
   I like doin' the tc moves
   I find it's relaxing
   I feel good after I leave

"I like going there, I like doin' the tc moves, and I find it's uh relaxing – I feel good after I leave, kay. So that's what keeps me goin' there." [6.1.280-281]

5.8) It's not just for the exercise, it's just for doin' it (TC)

"...I don't think we'd ever quit. The bottom line is we wouldn't quit, you know. As much as we've learned the steps and we know them back and forwards and that, I like doin' them. It's, it's not just for the exercise, it's just for doin' it." [6.1.290-293]

Statements

- I don't think we'd ever quit
- The bottom line is we wouldn't quit, you know
- As much as we've learned the steps and we know them back and forwards and that, I like doin' them.
- It's, it's not just for the exercise
- it's just for doin' it.

5. It was very interesting

"It was very interesting for me to take this, I liked it very much and I wanted to keep up with it..." [6.1.62]

5.1) There was a totally different thing to do tc with, ok, so that kept me interested and I kept going

"But, the reason was, that Mr. Chen, he introduced us to the sword. Well now there was a totally different thing to do tc with, ok, so that kept me interested and I kept going. And then kung fu come along. Well now I've always wanted to learn Kung fu this is the thing to know. So that kept me in there." [6.1. 282-288]

6. I liked it very much - we liked the class right off the bat

"It was very interesting for me to take this, I liked it very much and I wanted to keep up with it..." [6.1.62]

"And we were lucky, because we liked the class right off the bat, ok. And what I've heard later from other people, that other people taking classes at different, other associations, that the fees were higher, they were more stricter on their moves, and uh, I got the general impression that it wasn't a lot of fun, eh" [6.1.89-92]

5.2) We liked the music that went along with (TC) it totally relaxes you - the music and the moves went hand in hand

"And then of course we liked the music that went along with it, because that was, kind of, I thought to myself 'that's relaxing' eh - I mean you do something, you know you're running down the street and you see all these people wired into music and stuff eh. But when you're doin' tc exercises well now this is something that's a little different, which is, which is good eh. And I've heard from other people that other associations don't even have music to tc eh, it's strictly just the program and that's it. So this was nice. So we liked it." [6.1.97-103]

"I like the music part, because uh, music is stimulating, eh, whether you listen at home or, like I said before, people running down the street and they're all wired up to this machine there. And with this, I guess it takes your mind off of a few things too, if you're tensed up and while you're doing these moves it totally relaxes you on these moves. And it's nice music eh, it's relaxing it's nice and – it's soothing. So it blends in with moves." [6.1.116-121]

"...we got Peter to get us the same tapes they have a the Multicultural then, we like the music and we've got 'em and we practise at home we'd put it on. Cause uh, to be honest with you Maria, they went hand in hand, the music and the moves went hand in hand, you know. If you were to do – like I find if I do tc without music it's not as relaxing – I mean it's relaxing enough but, but the music in the background eh, it uh, it sends you to a more relaxing kind of mood" [6.1.124-129]

7. The people are very nice

5.3) When we first started the people were very willing to help you out

"...this particular class that we joined, which was we were very lucky, I thought, and still think we were very lucky to go in with this class because, the people are very nice there, for one thing, and, when we first started the people were, even even the students themselves were very willing to help you out, you know. So, we liked that" [6.1.93-96]

7.1) The social functions are nice

"...we have these social gatherings that, you know, everybody gets to know each other at these functions, Chinese New Year's and stuff like that" [6.1.103-106]

"...the people that we know there..." [6.1.277]

"...the social functions are nice after too, like the, you know, the BBQs we get together, you know, kind of good feeling thing." [6.1.309-310]

8. We have a lot of fun doin' (TC)/ It's a fun class

"...I don't think we'll go anywhere else, because we have a lot of fun doin' it" [6.1.103-104]

"It's a fun class. Anything you wanna do, is gotta be fun. If it's not fun, you don't wanna do it" [6.1.307-308]

"And then you have these performances. I'm not too willing, to be honest with you, volunteer for these uh, so called performances at different occasions, puts a little stress on you, but I don't mind it, really.....That was a little tenseful because you always wanna do good eh, you always want to do proper moves and you want to look good eh, so. And then after that it was uh, more like a lot of fun [6.1.106-108; 112-114]

9. It would have to be the exercise

INT- Ok. So, what would you say it is that keeps you going to this tc group every week, even though, well you're obviously busy and you work shifts and everything else, what is it that keeps you coming back?

"...I guess it's uh, the exercise, it would have to be the exercise, you know, because you know, now – we don't do any exercise at all..." [6.1.277-279]

10. I was threatening to quit but (my wife) told me not to and, we're still there

"...– there was one time I did wanna quit, because it was gettin' boring for me, ok, repetition, ok. Ok, that's repetition, it got boring for me, and I'd like to learn, I'm the type of person who likes to learn something else, so I was threatening to quit but (my wife) told me not to and, we're still there." [6.1.282-285]

11. I have to keep going back to refresh my memory

"And now that I've forgotten some of the steps I have to keep going back to refresh my memory." [6.1.289-290]

INT- You mentioned that "now that I've forgotten some of the steps I have to keep going back to refresh my memory" When did you find you had forgotten some of the tai chi moves?

B- Not so much about forgetting the moves, but getting them mixed up with other moves between the 3 different sets [6.2.32-37]

Ben
Paraphrase List: Lived Experience

1. When I first start the moves, my mind is on gettin' ready

> "...when I first start, when I first start the moves, my mind is on gettin' ready." [6.1.133-134]

1.1) Mentally I isolate myself from surrounding area – examples – sight and sound
1.2) Then I picture myself 'on' - Refresh in my mind the beginning of each move

INT- What do you mean by "when I first start the moves, my mind is on gettin' ready". Can you describe in more detail what you are thinking about when you are 'getting ready?'

BD- Just before I start or begin to do tai chi, I try to loosen up physically and mentally. Physically – I do the warm-ups. Mentally I isolate myself from the surrounding area – examples – sight and sound, then I picture myself on. Refresh in my mind the beginning of each move. [6.2.3-10]

2. Once the get-ready mode's finished, and I'm practising (TC) I totally relax

2.1) Your problems are forgotten

> "...if you're worrying about something, if you can get yourself in – you know, totally dedicated to tc, and, like I said before, you know, you have visions of this, you relax, your problems are forgotten." [6.1.213-215]

> "...I can relax, mostly relaxing, and I don't think about anything and as for general things that go around me, like troubles and that, like we're having now in the world, they have that won't even fizz on me when I'm doing this eh" [6.1.232-236]

2.2) My mind doesn't think about anything
2.3) The moves come automatically

> "Once I'm in the – get-ready mode's finished, and I'm practising, I totally relax, which means that my mind doesn't think about anything. I don't think about the next move, it's all automatic, ok, and I don't think about a thing, you know. [6.1.133-136]

2.4) Everything else just disappears

> "...once I get going, everything else just disappears, I don't think about anything, the moves come automatically, and it's uh, slow nice movements and, and when I finish I come back to reality." [6.1.146-149]

2.5) I don't think about anybody, in fact I don't even see anybody
2.6) Like a daydream world

INT- Somebody told me the other day when I was talking to them that when they do it they feel like they uh, they use an interesting expression, they say they feel like they lose the room -

B- It's true. Yes, I would agree with that, oh yeah. Because uh, I don' think about anybody, in fact I don't even see anybody. I mean, I got people all around me, and I kind of, like a daydream world eh. Yet I don't think about anything or nothing, I just go through the moves and everything is nice and slow and smooth, and then I come like I said, when I finish that and everybody starts clapping their hands (at the end) kinda like you wake up. [6.1.152-160]

2.7) I feel like on a cloud - The rhythmic motion of the moves, makes me feel at ease and soothes my body and mind

INT-You mentioned that your 'body feels good' when you do tai chi. Can you describe what it is about your body that feels good?

B- The rhythmic motion of the moves, makes me feel at ease and soothes my body and mind. I feel like on a cloud and my body responds

3. Time Seems to Not Exist - I lose time

INT- OK. What about your, I guess your sense of time passing, as you're doing the tc?

B- I lose, I lose time. Cause I'm, when I'm doing this I don't uh, I don't picture it as a timetable or anything like that where I have to perform in a certain amount of time, it's just, when I first start, like I said – when I first start eh, I'm there, and then I get right into the moves and that, time seems to not exist. That'd be about the best way to put it, yeah. [6.1.184-189]

4. Whenever I do tc, visualization for me to relax, comes naturally

5.1) Sometimes if I visualize, too strongly, I lose my place in the moves

5.2) I can visualize the stream with the leaves falling into it, the smell of fall, you know, dead leaves if that, particular thing

5.3) Another one would be, desert. I can feel the heat, I can feel the sand in my toes eh, when I'm doin' these (TC) moves

"...whenever I do tc, visualization for me to relax, comes naturally." [6.1.162;166]

INT- Ok. Do any of those um, sort of images from visualization ever come into your mind when you do the tc or have you ever noticed that? Do you start daydreaming?

B- Uh, yes. That comes in, and sometimes if I visualize, too strongly, I lose my place in the moves. It's happened to me several times I get so relaxed, and then if I do have a vision, I have to look around to catch myself to see where I'm at. Because I lose well, I lose my place.

INT- Kay. So what do you envision, you know, at those times when you actually have lost your spot, like what are you visualizing?

B- Oh, ok, one example would be uh – mountains. Kay, I like mountains I like trees I like streams. And I can visualize the stream with the leaves falling into it, the smell of fall, you know, dead leaves if that, particular thing. And uh, that's one example, Kay, so, and another one would be, desert. I can feel the heat, I can feel the sand in my toes eh, when I'm doin' these moves. And then, like I said before, if I get too lost in this visualization and relaxation mode doing these moves, I forget where I am.

INT- And so you kind of have to-

B- I have to look around to see where we're at, to continue, eh. So that's how relaxing it is for me. [6.1.167-183]

5. When I finish (practising TC) I come back to reality

"...when I finish I come back to reality." [6.1.149]

"...when I finish that (the TC moves) and everybody starts clapping their hands (at the end) kinda like you wake up." [6.1.157-160]

6. The music and the (TC) moves went hand in hand – the music blends with the moves
    6.1)The music that went along with (TC) totally relaxes you on the TC moves
    6.2)If I do TC without music it's not as relaxing

"And then of course we liked the music that went along with it, because that was, kind of, I thought to myself 'that's relaxing' eh - I mean you do something, you know you're running down the street and you see all these people wired into music and stuff eh. But when you're doin' tc exercises well now this is something that's a little different, which is, which is good eh. And I've heard from other people that other associations don't even have music to tc eh, it's strictly just the program and that's it. So this was nice. So we liked it." [6.1.97-103]

"I like the music part, because uh, music is stimulating, eh, whether you listen at home or, like I said before, people running down the street and they're all wired up to this machine there. And with this, I guess it takes your mind off of a few things too, if you're tensed up and while you're doing these moves it totally relaxes you on these moves. And it's nice music eh, it's relaxing it's nice and – it's soothing. So it blends in with moves." [6.1.116-121]

"...we got Peter to get us the same tapes they have a the Multicultural then, we like the music and we've got 'em and we practise at home we'd put it on. Cause uh, to be honest with you Maria, they went hand in hand, the music and the moves went hand in hand, you know. If you were to do – like I find if I do tc without music it's not as relaxing – I mean it's relaxing enough but, but the music in the background eh, it uh, it sends you to a more relaxing kind of mood" [6.1.124-129]

7. I visualize doing the tc moves when sitting in a chair sometimes [6.Fieldnote1.7]

Ben
Paraphrase List: Perceived Outcomes

"(TC) helps, mind and body for me" [6.1.225]

1. TC's good if you've go aches and pains, sore back or whatever [Physical]
    - 1.1 I went to tc – (my elbow) felt better, and then I practised a little bit and it felt better yet
    - 1.2 I had sciatica in my back - somehow or another I practised enough (TC) that I guess it worked itself loose

"I just go through the motions, and it feels good, my body feels good, in fact, uh, there was a time here last week that uh, I injured my uh, injured my elbow eh, tennis elbow.... And uh, I couldn't move it up and down or anything. And I didn't think I was gonna do good in class eh, I wasn't gonna make some moves that they, gotta use your hand quite a bit that uh, that I wouldn't be able to use the hand. I was finished that class, and I felt 100% better. I could move my hand the next day, and no problem, it was just like a miracle eh. And I thought to myself, 'well, you know, not only does tc relax you but it's uh, it's good medically' you know, cause if you've go aches and pains, sore back or whatever, and uh, that's what I find..." [6.1.136-146]

"...I had sciatica in my back eh, in fact I couldn't do tc because of that, but somehow or another I practised enough a little bit that I guess it worked itself loose..." [6.1.198-199]

"...tennis elbow is a forever thing, that's the one...That you don't get rid of, and yet, after – I've had people look at this arm and I had a massage therapist work on the right side, he cured that eh, but this one (left arm) I figured I might have to go back to him but when I went to tc and I did the moves a little slower than usual, I didn't strain myself, but as a rule the moves are kinda slow and soft anyway. And uh, next day it felt better, and then I practised a little bit and it felt better yet. So, and then, like I said physically it helps, even if y – I think, for people who have trouble, especially with their nervous system or sprains, you have to do some mild form of exercise, tc would be ideal thing." [6.1.202, 204-211]

2. Before I took TC I was always tense, never relaxed - once we start taking tc, that feeling kinda slowly fade(d) away [Emotional/Mental]
    - 2.1 When I do TC, it relaxes me
    - 2.2 When you relax you don't think about anything so stress is gone

"...before I even took it (tc) you know, I was always tense, never relaxed, eh. Always go go go, mad rush here there all over, you know, always just highballin' it. And then once we start taking tc, uh, that feeling kinda slowly, slowly would be the word, yeah, it slowly fade away. Because uh, I find when I do tc, it relaxes me, mostly, and when you relax you don't think about anything so stress is gone, and I find that it's very beneficial for me. Because then I don't think about anything I don't get tense up."

- 2.3 I feel good after I leave

"I like doin' the tc moves, and I find it's uh relaxing – I feel good after I leave, kay." [6.1.280-281]

3. (TC) rids my body of the daily grind and troubles of the day

INT- What effect has tai chi had on your hyperthyroidism or hypertension, if any?
B- Tai Chi for me is very relaxing, therefore it rids my body of the daily grind and troubles of the day [6.1.18-21]

3.1 Sometimes if I have lots on my mind, if you're worrying about something, when I do practise TC, that seems to disappear - your problems are forgotten

"Emotional, uh, sometimes if I have lots on my mind, you know, stressed out for the day or whatever, you know, which is through work or whatever, or something, some kind of trouble in the family or whatever. So, when I do practise tc or when I take it at this uh, that seems to disappear." [6.1.193-196]

"And, good for stress, like I touched on before, that if you're worrying about something, if you can get yourself in – you know, totally dedicated to tc, and, like I said before, you know, you have visions of this, you relax, your problems are forgotten." [6.1.213-215]

- *Troubles and that, like we're having now in the world, they have that won't even fizz on me when I'm doing this (TC) [overlap with LE]*

"...once I learned the moves and that, and now, I find if I do tc it's it's beneficial this way for me that I can relax, mostly relaxing, and I don't think about anything and as for general things that go around me, like troubles and that, like we're having now in the world, they have that won't even fizz on me when I'm doing this eh" [6.1.232-236]

Shirley
Paraphrases: TC Initiation

1. (My) Doctor said 'Why don't you join Tai Chi for your stress/depression'

    "...I went back to the dr., this was 4 1/2 years ago, and I said ' oh I need something for my nerves' and he said 'no you don't' and he was very abrupt about it and he said um 'why don't you join tc?' and he said 'I'm not giving you anything'..." [7.1.72-74]

    "...the dr. he just said 'you go join tc for stress, for your depression'" [7.1.295-296]

2. (My husband said) 'We're gonna join Tai Chi'
3. (My husband said) 'You're gonna do it'

"...I was just a nervous wreck so I came home and I said 'B__ (husband) he (doctor) told me to join tc, what is that?' I had no idea what it was, whereas B__ knew what it was. And so, B__ just let it go, and it was about a month later, picks me up from church, and he says, 'you know where we're going today?' he says 'we're going to join tc' and I, just froze. Cause I was very scared. And I said 'no we're not' and he says 'yes we are' he says 'you're gonna do it'. And so I asked some questions where it was and that and ok we went. And I was very nervous." [7.1.74-82]

Shirley
Paraphrase List: TC Continuation

1. (My husband) would push me (to do TC) - He had to push me (Initially)
    1.1) I wouldn't have gone (to tc) by myself (Initially)

> "So we went there and it was a small class, and uh, the first class, I didn't know what I was doing. Went home, I'm crying. I says 'I'm stupid, I'll never learn this, I'm not going back' and he said ' yes you are' and he made me practise he says 'you go home and we're gonna practise' and it was a good thing he was there and he could remember things better than me. So he would push me 'yeah we're doing this' 'yeah you can do it'. The following week I go home I'm cryin' again I says 'I can't do this' he says 'yes you can' I was just so nervous and then, to get up in front of people. And I always thought 'Mr. Chen, please don't call on me' you know, [laughs]" [7.1.84-91]

> "So it uh, the first month went by with me crying, after every class, because I felt I was stupid, compared to the other people. I felt they were always better than me. Ben says 'no, there's nobody better than you. They're just like you'. So it was, it took um, maybe three four months where I start to feel a bit more comfortable, and we would practise, everyday, it maybe was just 15 minutes or whatever, but we would practise, and he would push me, and he would remember the steps when I said 'what do we do now' 'we do this and uh' he said" [7.1.93-99]

INT- So, if um, if Ben hadn't been there with you do you think you would've been able to keep going?
SD - No.
INT- no
SD - No. I wouldn't have gone by myself. Never. He was my pillar. He had to push me. And uh he really pushed. You know, he didn't go with this me crying bit you know. [laughs] Oh no, he was very stern, he says 'you're going to do it'
INT- Ok. But your happy that you -
SD - Yeah I am
INT- persevered
SD - Yeah... [7.1.228-238]

2. I enjoy doing (TC)

> "...(my husband) said he wanted to quit and I said 'no we're still going to go cause I enjoy doing it'" [7.1.242-243]

2.1) I enjoy it very much for an exercise which I never thought was an exercise

INT- Right. What would you say is the I guess, what would you say you like the best or what are some of the things that you really like about doing tc, now that you've been doing it for a few years?
SD - Best thing I like about it? I enjoy it very much for an exercise which I never thought it was an exercise. [7.1.164-168]

"... (tc) is some form of exercise for us to do" [7.1.243]

2.2) I enjoy the people – we've made a lot of friends
2.3) It's lots of fun

INT- What's um, what is it, for you that keeps it interesting then, that keeps you wanting to come back
SD - Well besides me enjoying it, and I enjoy the people – we've made a lot of friends. We've never had so many Chinese friends before – usually our daughter, cause she went to ___ and then ___ [names of schools] and all her friends were Chinese. And to this day they're still friends. And it seems, once you make a friend a friend with Chinese, they're friends for life. [pause] and uh, there's a lot of nice people there. And socially, you know the odd time that we get together, if we go to a banquet or whatever, and uh, we, we enjoy it
INT- Kay. No that sounds like that's a really important part for you is the people.
SD - Oh yeah they're well they're so nice you know. [7.1.244-254]

"...here (at tc), we socialize, we have tea and you socialize with everybody and, we have fun, And we made a lot of friends" [7.1.323]

SD- ..it's lots of fun
INT- Right
SD - Especially at the ____ [location name of TC class]. Because I've heard of other places where it's strictly business, there's no fun, it is business. [7.1.318-321]

Shirley
Paraphrase list: Lived Experience

1. Once I get into the (TC) routine, I can relax
   - 1.1) I'm concentrating on the (TC) moves
   - 1.2) I'm not thinking about the people around me or anything
   - 1.3) There were times (when) I got so relaxed I forgot my next step

INT- Ok. So the actual, the performing part of tc has been helpful for you in a way

SD - Right. I'm still a little bit jittery before it starts, but, um, when was it that was last year, not this year but last year, Mum and Dad had come, to watch us perform, there at the um, was it Shaw center or was it the Agricom where we were at?

INT- Probably-

SD - Probably the Shaw, mhm. And uh, I didn't see my parents sitting there, you know with the lights and everything, but afterwards we met them and she says to me ' I've never seen you so relaxed' she said 'you weren't scared?' and I said 'no, when I'm up there on that stage' – mind you it took me a little while 'when I'm up there on that stage, you see the lights, I block those people out, I'm concentrating on what I'm doing, there's nobody else around' But she's never seen me so relaxed doing tc.

INT- How bout when you're um, when you're actually just in the class like no stress from the performing aspect, just actually when you're in the class doing it with the group. Do you get the same sensations? Of just concentrating on what your doing and not anybody else?

SD - Yes, except when I forget some steps like Pushing Hands I forgot some moves [laughs] so I have to look around and see what I'm doing. And that will make me nervous you know

INT- Mm

SD - But once I get into the routine, I can relax, and there were times I have done it at home, and the music is on, and I'm doing it I have gotten halfway maybe through Moving Hands, I got so relaxed I forgot my next step. [pause] I was relaxed

INT- Oh right, right

SD - That I had to stop and think 'what do I do' – that's how, that's how much I, relaxed I was. [7.1.133-157]

INT- Mm, ok. So um, what usually goes through your mind when your, when you're just doing the tc, when you're right in the middle of it?

SD - [pause]

INT- Do you think about anything?

SD - No I'm concentrating on what I'm doing, on my, moves. Otherwise I'm not thinking about the people around me or anything I'm trying to concentrate on my moves [7.1.158-163]

   - 1.4) I'm not thinking of the problems around me, when I do my TC

"...I'm not thinking of the problems around me, when I do my tc." [7.1.178]

2. Doing TC without music it's horrible, I don't like it - I have to have that music there, it is so relaxing
    - 2.1) I can't concentrate that much when there's no music
    - 2.2) When there's music it makes me very peaceful inside and I, just forget about everything.

SD- the music we got from Peter because oh, oh doing it without music it's horrible, I don't like it- I have to have that music there, it is so relaxing. And we – we've heard there's tc classes around the city where they don't do tc to music and they were surprised 'you do tc to music?' There was the secretary from church she took tc over at the Northgate, Northgate Lions centre and it was an hour class and, he taught them tc and they they were mostly seniors there and, no music at all. And I said – so I gave her a tape recorded 'you do it to, music and see how relaxing it is'. It does make a difference

INT- What do you find is the difference for you with the music and without? Like have you tried it both – you've tried it both ways -

SD - Oh yeah. Oh it's it's, I can't concentrate that much when there's no music. When there's music it makes me very peaceful inside and I, just forget about everything.

INT- Right

SD - When there isn't music, I'm thinking about things, going on around me, and then I'm not concentrating on my steps.

INT- Oh ok, right. What about when they have the music that has some of the words to it – cause sometimes they actually have words and singing-

SD - mhm, mhm

INT- Does that does that distract you?

SD - If it's too loud yes, I prefer no singing at all.

INT- Oh, ok

SD - Just, just music. [7.1.100-121]

- 2.3) Tai Chi music is very relaxing to listen to even without doing Tai Chi moves
- 2.4) The music relaxes my mind and body

"Tai Chi music is very relaxing to listen to even without doing Tai Chi moves. The music relaxes my mind and body." [7.2.19-20]

Shirley
Paraphrase List Perceived Outcomes

> "I just stress the point that (TC's) good for depression and health, for one being healthy, especially as we get older, a lot of people suffer from arthritis and it does help the arthritis if you keep it up"
> [7.1.328-330]

1. Once we (get) into the (TC) routine, it does help (the arthritis in my knees and my lower back)[Physical]
    1.1) (Arthritis symptoms) gradually go away - and then I can start bending a little bit more
        - *Helps (as far as pain and flexibility) [verified with Shirley]*

> "...I know if I did it every day I wouldn't have as many aches in my knees."
> [7.1.38]

> "I did it (tc) today you know and at first you know when we were just doing those basic steps and that one that lunge you know where you put your hands out and then you lunge down, I can't get down, my knees are very sore, but then, once we got into the routine, they started to feel a little bit better."
> [7.1.43-46]

INT- So physically you said you find that it's been helpful for your arthritis, particularly for your knees, is that right?
SD - yes, mhm, and my back. My lower back and once, like I say if I haven't done it for awhile and it's sore to get started again, but once I'm back into the routine and faithfully doing it, it does help
INT- how so? Tell me a bit about what happens with your symptoms when you've done tc
SD - They gradually go away, they're not as – and then I can start bending a little bit more. [7.1.197-203]

INT- Right,ok. So you find it helps as far as pain -
SD - Oh yeah it does
INT- and flexibility, being able to bend
SD - oh yeah. [7.1.211-214]

2. Hopefully (if I) continue the TC that would help strengthen the bones

SD- ...when I did have x-rays on my knees there in July or August the dr. says 'well you'll eventually need a knee replacement' and I says 'oh don't you talk to me about that' I don't want anything like that. So hopefully we continue the tc that that would help
INT- Oh, ok
SD - You know and to strengthen the bones so one doesn't have to have surgery [7.1.205-210]

3. (TC) has helped depression/stress [Mental/Emotional]
    - *(TC) took a While to get used to*

INT- Ok, right. No I think that's just interesting that one type of relaxation method um, really really wasn't your thing, and then this one you found you just took to it once you got used to it

SD - Once I got used to it but it took awhile.

[7.1.224-227]

3.1)I'm not thinking of the problems around me, when I do my tc

3.2)I'll get depressed now and then you know, but it's nothing like before that I had to go on pills - I am not on any medication (for depression or anxiety currently)

3.3)I can concentrate better

SD- ...it (tc) has helped depression. That is one thing I, will always stress, it helps stress depression whatever. I will tell people that.

INT- Tell me more about that. How do think it's helped the depression, for you?

SD - because, um, I'm not thinking of the problems around me, when I do my tc. Sure I'll get depressed now and then you know, but it's nothing like before that I had to go on pills, and I did not want to rely, on pills to keep me going, that's no way of living. Whereas tc, besides exercise, besides health wise, helping my arthritis or my back problems or whatever, stress, Number 1 for me

INT- Oh, ok. So for you, has the hallmark of the depression been, kind of feeling anxious? Do the 2 go together for you?

SD - Oh yeah, mhm, yeah [7.1.174-185]

INT- Are you currently on any medication for depression or anxiety? Is this a change from before you started doing tai chi?

SD- No – I am not on any medication [7.2.13-15]

INT- Um, mentally, have you noticed any changes in anything to do with your mental functions like um, your concentration, your memory, anything like that?

SD - I don't know about memory but concentration yes I can concentrate better because like those stress management classes uh, the dr. was talking and it was going in one ear and out the other for me. [7.1.215-219]

3.4)Tai Chi has helped me to relax and come out of my shell

INT- Can you be more specific about your depression symptoms and how you believe tai chi has helped them? If you feel ok giving a real-life example, that would be helpful.

SD- I couldn't face the day, I would prefer to stay in bed under the covers and feel safe. I would feel sad and lonely most of the time. Tai Chi has helped me to relax and come out of my shell [7.2.9-11]

4. I have a little bit more confidence, in myself

4.1) I'm not that nervous person that I used to be

4.2) I can speak in front of people

SD - And then that first year, cause we started in March, and then Mr. ____ (TC teacher) – it was after Christmas it was Chinese New Year. Well he got us to perform there at the culture centre there, and uh, if it wasn't for L___ and ___ (TC students) being there on stage I don't think I could do it and um, E___ (TC student) was the other one who was with us. And uh, I though 'ooh I'm nervous' But after that, cause you would never get me on stage in front of people before.

INT- Right

SD - Not me. And after that, I have a little bit more confidence, in myself, and then the more I kept doing it, well my confidence built up [7.1.124-132]

"...I think I benefit from the exercise in that is has helped me, I'm not that nervous person that I used to be, I can speak in front of people..." [7.1.172-174]

Cathy
Paraphrases: TC Initiation

1. I always have been very active- I had to give that up so, only thing I was still doing was walking, and I didn't find that quite enough

   "I always have been very active and I was doing x-country skiing and walking and cycling, then I had back surgery – it was quite a number of years ago, so but cycling didn't agree with my back. And then I have ba in my hands, and wrists, and I have OA in a lot of joints and, so, x-country skiing um I was starting to get scared that I would fall, cause you have the strap, you know, in your hand [motions to left thumb web space]. And so I gave, had to give that up so, only thing I was still doing was walking, and I didn't find that quite enough." [8.1.2-8]

2. Our son said to me, 'Mum you should do tc'

   "And then our middle son who lived in Vancouver said to me, 'Mum you should do tc'. Cause he saw the tc people in the parks everyday. And so, after a while I thought, 'well I try it'" [8.1.8-10]

3. I had heard about it
4. I had seen it advertised

   INT- Ok. So, for you, it sounds like you were quite open to trying tc, it was just your son mentioned 'try it' and then you went. Did you have any reservations?

   CB- Um, no I didn't have...reservations about it but uh, cause I, I had heard about it and I had seen it advertised [8.1.52-55]

5. it was only 5 minutes from my home

   C- ...we lived in um, in Blue Quill, and, it was always at Whyte Ave. at night, and I said 'I don't want at Whyte ave. in the dark at night'. When this external class came in Providence Centre, it was only 5 minutes from my home. So that's when I tried it, and uh I really liked it, right from the beginning.

   INT- Ok, so it was convenient

   CB- Yeah, that was the convenience that started, and um, of course, as I said after a month I was on Whyte ave. anyway...[8.1.55-61]

Cathy
Paraphrases: TC Continuation

INT- So what is it that kept you going even though that first experience for you, you felt like you didn't know anything?

CB- Well, I think it was the instructor that gave me the encouragement. And then as I said, after a month I started feeling better, and once I started feeling better, you know, I wasn't going to let it go, and then I found out the more tc I did, the better I felt, you know. I mean, now I get tired of doin' a whole day of tc, but, that's a normal tiredness, well before, I, I could crawl in a corner and cry, without doing anything. And then I would be so tired without doing anything. So this is, for me it has been just wonderful. [8.1.81-88]

1. I Got Really Hooked Right From the Beginning - really liked it

"And I got really hooked at it right from the beginning." [8.1.10-11]

"... I really liked it, right from the beginning." [8.1.58]

2. After a month I started feeling better, and once I started feeling better, you know, I wasn't going to let it go

"I started in external class and, and after a month I started already, feeling the results, so I joined the club and I started taking more classes – I still was going to the external class but I was also going to the club to do more classes." [8.1.13-16]

"...after a month I started feeling better, and once I started feeling better, you know, I wasn't going to let it go..." [8.1.84-85]

3. I found the more I did (TC) the better I felt

"I joined the club and I paid my registration and uh, and um, and went to classes in the club and to practise sessions. And I found the more I did the better I felt" [8.1.24-25]

"...I found out the more tc I did, the better I felt, you know" [8.1.85-86]

4. I think it was the instructor that gave me the encouragement

"I bravely went out there by myself and I was the oldest in the class, and I felt really stupid, cause I thought well all these people were younger, and I always thought they knew what they were doing, and I never knew when I got home 5 minutes later I didn't remember what we had done, uh. So I remember that I said to my instructor one time, I said 'I'm too old I'm never going to learn this' and he said, 'Ah don't be silly the other's just pretend that they know something' [laughs]. And I'm the only one that's still doing it, the only one that became an instructor and none of the others continued." [8.1.72-78]

INT- So what is it that kept you going even though that first experience for you, you felt like you didn't know anything?

CB- Well, I think it was the instructor that gave me the encouragement. [8.1.81-83]

> "Now I must tell you though, that I was doing it for 3 months when I met Master ___, you know, he was the founder of Taoist TC, brought it to Canada. And, every time he had – I went to his workshop here, well my instructor almost pushed me there [laughs] – and I'm still very thankful for that, because Master ___, has helped me right from the very first time, every time I went to a workshop he would give me encouragement he would give me corrections, he would personally come over and, you know, pull my hand in a certain way or push my leg or whatever, and um, so I'm forever grateful for him. I'm sorry that he has left us, but I promise that I will keep working hard and try to, to keep his memory alive." [8.1.89-97]

5. Even (if) you learn it (tc) and you say 'yes I know it' you have to go and refine it

> "...I find that if you don't go to workshops, um, I don't see how anyone can really, really progress if they don't go to workshops" [8.2.235-236]

> "...I usually go there (Orangeville) for a week, sometimes 10 days, have a weekend workshop and then take the next week whatever, you know, Lok Hup workshop or tc workshop. Now I'm booked for next month I'm going to a sword and sabre workshop and uh so, I mean even so you learn it and you say 'yes I know it' you have to go and refine it if you will, that's maybe the best word." [8.2.249-254]

> "...it's also from reading' [8.2.268]

Cathy
Paraphrases: Lived Experience

INT- Um, maybe you could tell me a little bit about when you're practising tc, kinda what you're experiencing, what it feels like for you.

CB- What it feels like? Um, it feels very, I feel very quiet inside, I feel very much at peace with myself and the whole world, I, I don't know, it just feels, feels wonderful. And besides that, I, you know, I can feel um, it was discussed to practise, but right now, I'm at this point now where I can really work my spine I can feel my spine stretching and turning and, uh, uh, I can feel my organs moving from side to side massaging them. [8.1.129-135]

1. Meditation in motion

"...you know, we call it (TC) 'meditation in motion'." [8.1.143-144]

INT- ...you talk about tc as being meditation in motion. Can you talk about that?

CB- Yeah. Ok, meditation in motion, as I told you before, when we started in the beginning, you try to be calm inside, you asking how I feel, right, I said very calm, peaceful, and you just visualize your next move. So you're really, while you're doing, you're not thinking about ' Oh my god, I forgot to pay that bill', 'oh my gosh I have to do this'', 'Oh my gosh', you know all this and 'Oh, what is this out on the street' you know, things like that. [8.1.344-351]

1.1) I feel very quiet and calm inside – at peace with myself and the whole world

"What it feels like (when I'm practising TC)? Um, it feels very, I feel very quiet inside, I feel very much at peace with myself and the whole world, I, I don't know, it just feels, feels wonderful." [8.1.131-132]

"...you try to be calm inside, you asking how I feel, right, I said very calm, peaceful..." [8.1.347]

1.2) I just visualize what I'm doing and what my next move will be

"...you just visualize your next move" [8.1.348]
"...just visualize what I'm doing and what my next move will be." [8.1.166]

1.3) You're not thinking about (what you have to do, what's happening outside the classroom)

"...while you're doing, you're not thinking about ' Oh my god, I forgot to pay that bill', 'oh my gosh I have to do this'', 'Oh my gosh', you know all this and 'Oh, what is this out on the street' you know, things like that." [8.1.348-351]

INT- Do you um, you were saying that, that people often are looking out the window – there's there's quite a few distractions, the traffic and

people walking by and so forth. Do you notice those when you're practising?
CB- No
INT- You don't notice them at all?
CB- I'm not distracted by it. But then as I said, this takes, you know, it takes practise. [8.1.149-154]

1.4) I quite often think about (my TC master)

INT- Hm. So, you've told me a bit about how your body feels when you practise. And um, what do you think about when you practise tc?
CB- What do I think about? Well I quite often think about Master ___, 'kay. [8.1.162-164]

2. (You) have peripheral view, so that you can stay together (with the group) - what we call the 'tai chi eye'

2.1) That doesn't take away from your meditative work, it helps to keep it that way

INT- Someone told me that when they do tc they um they 'lose the room' that's how they said
CB- what?
INT- Like they 'lose the room' everything sort of disappears for them
CB- No. No I wouldn't say that. What I try to, what I have myself now and what I try to teach my classes is to develop what we call the 'tai chi eye'
INT- The 'tai chi eye' yes?
CB- And you know, have peripheral view, so that you see, so that you can stay together
INT- ok
CB- and people do things together
INT- So you're you're aware of people on each side of you is it?
CB- Yeah
INT- and all around you
CB- Yeah
INT- Ok
CB- And that doesn't, you know that doesn't take away from your meditative work, it helps to keep it that way, ok. Rather than when you see one arm going that way and one leg going that way, you know, that's just distracting.
INT- Oh, ok
CB- But to say 'to lose the room', no. I mean you, as I said, you know, you try to forget about all your worries outside [8.1.352-372]

3. I can feel my spine stretching and turning [physical]

"I'm at this point now where I can really work my spine I can feel my spine stretching and turning" [8.1.133-135]

"You have to be at a certain level before you feel that. You know, it takes a lot of practise and a lot of concentration." [8.1.142-143]

"When I really noticed my spine it was probably the last 3 years I think, and uh, that I really, you know, felt it really, and was aware of it." [8.1.172-173]

CB- ...you start feeling your spine, cause once you do it internally, your spine not only stretches this way [vertically] also goes that way [rotates] and it stretches that way [horizontal shift] you know, it stretches

INT- ok, so rotating, and shifting

CB- yeah, it stretches different ways

4. You try to get your weight in what we call the bubbling springs- (the ball) of your foot

"Then you try to get your weight in what we call the bubbling springs – this part of your foot [points to the ball of foot]...There is a point on the ball of your foot and there's a point here [palm of hand] and a point on top of your hair [places hand on crown of head] that connects the meridians connect with each other and you try to keep most of your weight and push from there [ball of foot] so that the push comes through the bones – this is later on – through your bones through your pelvic area and up [draws a path from ball of foot through leg to pelvic area and trunk....so this is also called a weight bearing exercise and that is regards if you really push from the feet, push through the bones, it becomes a weight-bearing exercise." [8.2.151-152; 156-161; 163-164]

5. When you put your hands up your hands are like feathers, you know they don't weigh anything

CB- So all these things you learn as you go along. Um, you learn to be very light, you know, have all your weight down below your waist, it's possible, so when you put your hands up your hands are like feathers, you know they don't weigh anything. [8.2.166-168]

6. You feel your internals being massaged

"...you feel really, internally and feel your internals being massaged..."

6.1) I know for myself that, you know my inside, my internals are working more and I can feel my chi moving around if you are totally relaxed

"...I know for myself that, you know my inside, my internals are working more and I can feel my chi moving around...if if you are totally relaxed [8.2.113-114, 117]

6.2) I can do it (tc) by myself and be totally relaxed and feel even more than when I'm with the group

"...I can do it (tc) by myself and be totally relaxed and really uh feel even more than when I'm with the group" [8.2.121-122]

7. Your breathing's even and relaxed and you don't have to think about your breathing

"...your breathing's even and relaxed and – you know you don't have to think about your breathing." [8.2.178-179]

Cathy
Paraphrases: Perceived Outcomes

1. (TC) has changed me totally - Physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually

"I feel that tc, for me at least, ok I'm just speaking for myself and I'm sure that a lot of people could tell you the same thing – it has changed me physically, mentally, totally." [8.1.233-234]

"...it (tc) has helped me so much physically, spiritually if you want, mentally, emotionally, whatever way you want to put it." [8.1.514-515]

2. I feel a lot better, healthier, stronger, a lot younger than I did 10 years ago

"...I think this (tc) keeps me even so my years go [laughs] they count up but I think this keeps me young, and I feel a lot healthier, a lot stronger a lot younger than I did 10 years ago, and I probably look a lot younger too than 10 years ago" [8.1.543-546]

2.1) I have a lot of energy - I can do everything now

"And, I feel a lot better, I feel a lot healthier than 10 years ago, I can do everything now, and uh, so it's a, yeah it has been, just an amazing improvement." [8.1.42-43]

INT- Mhm. So would you say that you're you're back to the same activity level as you were when you were previously quite active, doing your skiing and walking?
CB- Yeah
INT- Is that right?
CB- Yeah. I could easily do that, yeah [8.1.44-48]

2.2) Before, I would be so tired without doing anything

"...now I get tired of doin' a whole day of tc, but, that's a normal tiredness, well before, I, I could crawl in a corner and cry, without doing anything. And then I would be so tired without doing anything." [8.1.86-88]

"...I have a lot of energy..." [8.1.225]

2.3) (My husband) said 'well, you look so much better I'm going to try TC too' [verification by outside source]

CB- ...when I started going there he (my husband) would drive me and he would sit there 1 hour or an 1 1/2 sometimes the practise session 2 hours, and then the instructor would say 'B___ (husband) why don't you try it?' So after 3 months he said 'I'm going to take tc' and I said d 'Oh? Right' and he said 'well, you look so much better I'm going to try it too'....
INT- well, he saw how you looked and it convinced him to try it?

CB- yeah, it was, just because I had improved so much. [8.2.413-417; 422-423]

3. After (TC), I got rid of my medications

3.1) I haven't taken anything for my arthritis for the last at least 5 1/2 years

"But uh now after (TC), I haven't taken anything for my arthritis for the last, oh at least, um let's see I've been doing it (TC) now for almost 8 years - at least 5 1/2 years." [8.1.37-39]

"...I got rid of my medication for arthritis..." [8.1.219]

3.2) I haven't used any of (my inhalers) for I don't know how many years

"...I was on 2 different inhalers that I had to take, 3 times a day I'm not even sure and I haven't used any of that for I don't know how many years....I had a whole bunch of these inhalers sitting there and one day I thought 'ok that's enough' so I threw them out." [8.1.219-221; 223-224]

3.3) I'm taking half and sometimes less than half (the medication) the dr. prescribes for me

INT- when you talked about other benefits you had said how you'd gotten rid of quite a few of your medications
CB- mhm
INT- right, for arthritis and, so are you currently on any medication?
CB- Yes I still am on a little bit of medication because I had so much pain and so much trouble with my bowels that I am still reluctant to let all of that go
INT- right
CB- And, I'm taking half and sometimes less than half what the dr. prescribes for me, I take....
INT- So it sounds like compared to what it would have been say 10 years ago,
CB- Oh yeah, yeah it's quite a big difference[8.2.379-386]

4. I had diverticulitis - I don't have any trouble with my bowels (now)

"...I had diverticulitis..." [8.1.29]

"...I was on a lot of medication, and um, because of all that medication, especially the medication for my arthritis, I developed stomach ulcers, and then I had to take medication for my stomach ulcers." [8.1.32-34]

"...I don't have any trouble with my bowels, you know..." [8.1.224-225]

5. My blood pressure is fine

"...my blood pressure is fine..." [8.1.224]

6. I don't think how I could cope with a sick husband if I didn't have TC [Mental/Emotional]

INT- [pause] Oh, ok [pause] Some people have told me they're able to um, things in their life don't seem as big of a burden-
CB- Mhm
INT- when they're doing tc. Would you agree with that?
CB- Oh yeah, definitely, yeah. This is what I say – what I just said, you know, letting things go and uh, uh, you know, like now I don't think how I could cope with a sick husband if I didn't have tc. My husband has cancer and he has Parkinson's, and uh, it's not always easy, but I found, as long as I'm able to go to tc and go to workshop and do things [8.1.254-262]

7. I think you get a lot of spiritual benefits out of tc

> "Spiritually – and yes I think you get a lot of spiritual benefits out of tc. And I think you know with letting go of your resentments, whatever you have, uh opening your heart to people, you know, you know, to the world, uh having compassion, I think that is all probably comes under the spiritual benefits." [8.2.342-345]

8. TC will bring out emotions in people - All the stuff that you have stored inside, all your resentment, it comes out – TC brings it to the surface and people learn to deal with it

CB- it's – I don't know about any other exercise that would do this but tc will bring out emotions in people. And we sometimes see that all of a sudden somebody starts crying, yeah
INT- Is that right
CB- and it's just because all their emotions come out which is a good thing. And um, all the stuff that you have stored inside, all your resentment all your, it comes out
INT- mm
CB- doing tc. Or sometimes grief, you know people have lost somebody
INT- Right. So it can be quite an emotional experience it sounds like
CB- Mhm
INT- What do you do with that though afterwards I guess. Does the tc simply bring it to the surface or -
CB- it brings it to the surface and people learn to deal with it, you know. I mean, I always carefully ask if there's anything I can do – most of the time they want to let people work through it. I f they want to cry, let them cry. And uh, sometimes they come and then they say 'I'm sorry' and I say 'no no no, don't feel sorry I know this happens to everyone' and, most everyone, you know. So, yeah, it seems to be – I'd almost say [pause] it doesn't sound normal but, almost a normal happening.
INT- Oh, ok, alright
CB- yeah
INT- So is that something that's more likely to happen when you're doing it with the group, or-
CB- mhm
INT- Oh, than if you're doing it by yourself
CB- Yeah [8.2.79-103]

8.1) I had a lot of resentment from things that had happened way way back - that's all past, forget about it, just try, try to be different person

CB- And I feel that, cause I had a lot of resentment from things that had happened way way back, eh, a lot of resentment, [deleted text] things like that I have, again that's all past, forget about it, just try, try to be different person.
INT- So you've learned to let things go, would you say?
CB- Yeh

9. Things that were important, are not important anymore
    2.2) What other people think of me doesn't bother me anymore
    2.3) I used to be hard on myself and critical
    2.4) Money, is not that important anymore

CB- I used to be hard on myself and critical, and, I find now I thought things that were important, are not important anymore, and -
INT- Like what, what kind of things?
CB- Um, well for instance, what other people think of me, um [pause] if I'm not dressed up to the hilt, it doesn't bother me anymore, it was things like that. Money, is not that important anymore. [8.1.233-240]

10. Compassion has become my main priority
    10.1) Helping other people, especially the people that are less fortunate and can't move as well as I do, the poor people

"I, I find all the things before I find now, that totally compassion, helping other people, and trying to, especially the people that are less fortunate and can't move as well as I do, that have difficulties, whatever way. And as you see, we have already there for the unfortunate people [looks towards box of clothing donations for Operation Friendship] down there, the poor people, um has become my main priority." [8.1.240-245]

"...I think trying to be um, um, totally compassionate and trying to help that I, does that fall under spiritual, I – I __ think it does" [8.1.270-272]

11. I have learned to Connect Mind Spirit and Body and to connect with the outer world

CB- I have learned to connect spirit mind and body, and also to some uh, it's not really an exercise, it's just a way of sitting, and to connect with the outer world, and I think in that way I can connect with Master ____ (deceased TC teacher) as well
INT- by connecting with the outer world what do you mean? Can you tell me more about that?
CB- like connecting with the outer world so, um, you know, like connecting with Master ___, connecting with whoever you – people that have gone. [8.2.362-369].

Anne
Paraphrase List: TC Initiation

1. They showed people doing tc, in Beijing. And I thought 'gee that looks neat!'
    1.1) I had seen other programs on TV
2. (I had) heard some women talking at the university about it.
3. When I finally got enough time then I started

INT- Ok. Well maybe what we could do then is you could tell me a little bit about um if you - you know what sparked your interest in tc and and where you remember your first encounter with it?

A- Ok. My first encounter was a program on TV, and I don't know what program it was, it was back in the early 1980's, and they showed people doing tc, in Beijing. And I thought 'gee that looks neat!' and you know, promptly forgot about it. And then in 1980 – now I've got to think back – it was probably '86, the TTCS was doing an extension course with the City of Edmonton, and they were teaching it at Jasper Place Co – uh high school. It was an extension course. And so I took it. And it was just a beginners, you know, 6-week think that they showed you a few moves. They didn't show you the entire set. And so um, I went and I thought ' this is great, I love it' you know. And then of course I was at university then and I couldn't make the time to come to class for the 3 month period. And in the meantime I had seen other programs on TV and heard some women talking at the university about it. So that's what piqued my interest. And so when I finally got enough time – no more classes no more exams, then I started.

INT- Oh ok, alright. Yeah because you had mentioned that there was sort of some breaks -

A- there's some breaks yes, because I took that little one-week extension course and then I didn't have the time and I had exams and I had practicums and just – your own life disappears when you're doing that, I'm sure you're aware of that [laughs]. Yeah, and so when I did have the time I came back to the TTCS. And then when we moved from here to BC, it was too far for me to go to the TTC and somebody in BC was teaching in the area, but she was teaching a different type of tc, and since I was still used to doing the Taoist type she didn't like what I was doing, and I didn't like how she was teaching, and so I just kept on doing the Taoist TC on my own. And then when we moved back here, I started up again. [9.1.203-228]

INT- Ok. And then you had said that your first introductory course was 6 weeks, right

A- Yes, it was 6 weeks and it was in it was in one of the schools in the neighbourhood

INT- Ok. And was that while you were – were you already in University by that time?

A- Yeah, I was. So, but – I just took the 6 week course – it was my first year of university. And therefore, although I had a lot of studying, I still had a little extra time – it was before I got really involved in the stuff I ended up doing at university

INT- Oh ok. Right in the practicums

A- Right in the practicums and stuff like that yeah. So it was my first year of university so I'm just taking introductory courses like English and a few other simple courses like that. And so although there was a lot of reading, it wasn't a lot of running around and preparation. After that it became a little more hectic and I just didn't have time.

INT- Ok. So you had the time at that point and it sounds like there was some convenience in it being close to you-

A- Right, close to home yes [9.2.41-54]

4. I just thought it was absolutely beautiful

INT- Can you recall, you know, in your first experience of doing the tc at the extension course, or even when you saw it on TV that one time, what is it about it that really caught you?
A- I think it was the beauty of the movements, the the, it just seemed liked such – almost a dance, you know, it was just the slow moving, um, and – I don't know how else to explain it except like a dance. It was just beautiful, I just thought it was absolutely beautiful, so [laughs] yeah
INT- Yeah
A- The other thing is too, that I have 5 years of intensive ballet in my background, so I think maybe that might have sort of triggered something in my brain that said ' that's like ballet, that's like dance' [9.1.252-262]

5. I was very physically active - I didn't want to lose what I had gained from that activity

> "At university let's face it, you're running from room to room to building to building you're carrying 25Lbs of books and so, I was very physically active during that 4 1/2 year period before I even started tc. And I didn't want to lose what I had gained from that activity. And so I found that with the tc, even though I'm not running as much as in you know from here to there, the tc has kept me physically, not active, but limber, flexible."

Anne
Paraphrase List: TC Continuation

1. The physical (and mental) aspects of doing TC I find beneficial to me (keeps me limber, mentally alert, allows me to move and at the same time detach from the pain) [Perceived outcomes]

> "...there's the physical aspect of doing tc, which I find, you know, is beneficial to me [9.1.894-895]

1.1) TC allows me to move and at the same time detach from the pain that I feel so I'm not going to give it up

> "...this is what tc does for me, is it allows me to move and at the same time detach from the pain that I feel, from the OA....And so I'm not going to give it up [9.1.389-390; 399]

1.2) Keeps me limber

INT- Um, and what is it about, what would you say it is for you about tc that that keeps you going, cause you've been doing this, I mean, even on your own without having to go with a group and so on, what has kept it up for you?

A- It benefits me. It's to my benefit. It keeps me limber it keeps me mentally alert, it um, yeah. [9.1.861-865]

2. Keeps me mentally alert (see above quote)

3. It's the companionship, and the friendships, that evolve from coming to do tc

A- [pause] What do I like the best about doing tc?

INT- You can say more than one thing if there's more than one thing

A- Yeah, there's more than one thing I think it's just – there are 2 things: there's the physical aspect of doing tc, which I find, you know, is beneficial to me. The other one is coming here, and being amongst people who, are doing the same thing you're doing, it's the companionship, and the friendships, that evolve from coming to do tc. So there are 2 things here: there's the social, and there's the physical. [9.1.892-898]

3.1) it does become a support group and almost an extended family
3.2) it's a community feeling
3.3) it's friendly, it's accepting
3.4) this has become an escape for me

A- ...I will continue to do tc whether I do it in a group or not, but coming to the group here, makes it that much more, interesting. Cause I did do it on my own for a long time and, you know, you do it, but uhh, it's not the same. You do it with a group, especially with a group that you've been doing it with for 5 years, and you know them well, it becomes, you know, 'I'm glad to see you' and 'How are you doing' and it becomes a support group. Mhmn

INT- Yeah, cause that's something you hadn't touched on before

A- Yeah, yes it does become a support group and it becomes, almost, almost an extended family, for some people very much so. For me it's been more difficult for it to become an extended family, but I have an awful lot of friends here, who are very supportive. And so, given my family home situation, this has become an escape for me. [9.1.898-908]

A- ...the extended family, the friendships and that, that has been very important to me in this group here, in the last few years, because of my home situation. Some of the people know it, most of them don't, but those people that do know, have, they keep track of me, they know where I am, and I know that they care. It's not that I don't have family that cares, it's just that this is a different type of caring. So it's not a, it's not a an obligatory type of caring, that you get in your family, it's just, other people caring for you. And I do the same for them. So, and I think that's been important to me. Um, it's the social, it's not even social, I don't even know what you call it?
INT- Sounds like some emotional support-
A- Yeah I think emotional support
INT- Kinda a sense of community-
A- A community
INT- or something
A- Yeah, something like that. Yeah, it's a community feeling I guess. It's difficult to put a label on it because it shifts and changes and one week, somebody will be in need of support, and that person will get it and you give it. And the next week maybe you might be in need of it and they give it back to you it's it's it's very difficult to explain, and it's very difficult to find something like that, in a group of disparate people. I mean we're all very very different here.
INT- Right
A- Very much so and we're all of different backgrounds and different financial status, and everything else. But there is an awful lot of caring going on. So I think that's important too. [9.1.918-941]

A- we come in and we laugh and we talk and we do our set and we go, but there's something there, there's some feeling of community. And it happens in all of the classes, because I've been to other classes as well as this one that I come to during the day. I've been to the evening classes too and it's the same thing
INT- Oh is that right?
A- Yeah, so it, it seems to just be the people that are attrac – it, not just the people – it seems to be that the people that are attracted to this form of tc seem to have that little extra something in it that makes them keep coming back
INT- and it's something that goes beyond the actual exercise itself-
A- Yes.
A- Yes it is. It's something, it's not tangible, you can't put your finger on it, but it's there. I don't know what it is, it's just there.
[9.1.955-967]

A- Yeah, it's friendly, it's accepting, and you know, it doesn't matter who you are, come on in, you're welcome. And it seems to, extend, not just this group but extends throughout the whole TTCS network, cause, you know, I've been here when they've had workshops I've worked in the kitchen chopping vegetables when they have workshops, and uh people would come in from all over Canada. And it's you know like, 'never met you before but welcome you come on in' So there is a large community network, that just seems to evolve. It's really neat, it is [9.1.970-976]

4. All my doctors have always said, 'stay with the tc

> "...all my doctors have always said, 'stay with the tc, even if you're only doing it on your own, you're at least keeping flexible, you're keeping mobile'." [9.1.474-476]

INT- Ok, alright. And it sure sounded like your doctor, or doctors have been supportive
A- Yes, for some unknown reason I've hit it really well, all my doctors have been supportive
INT- That's great
A- Yeah, yeah, we just got a new doctor actually, because our old doctor's moved out of town, and I sorta, you know, you hesitate and 'I do tc" and she says 'oh great, I'm so glad to hear you're doing tc!" she says 'that's great for you, keep doing it'. And I thought 'great, she and I see eye to eye' [laughs] [9.1.727-734]

5. I thought ' well this (TC) is neat and I like doing it and I enjoy doing it'

INT- So, how did you keep up the, just the motivation – what was the incentive to keep practising
A- I don't know
INT- especially alone
A- I don't know it was just something that I thought ' well this is neat and I like doing it and I enjoy doing it'... [9.2.222-227]

6. TC has become a part of me

A- It's (TC) just become a part of me now, I can't see not doing it. It's not a compulsion to do it, it's just that it's become part of me now and I'll just keep on doing it until the day I can't do it. [9.1.865-867]

INT- So, how did you keep up the, just the motivation – what was the incentive to keep practising
A- ...I guess maybe because it just sort of, was, something that I did, that's it, it was just part of me, that's all it is that's all I can say. And it's become even more so now
INT- Right ok
A- And I just wanted it to become part of me so
INT- No it sounds like you integrated it very early
A- Yeah
INT- Right from the start practically
A- Yeah [9.2.217, 227-234]

6.1) There's just something missing (when tc is absent from my day)

> "Do I notice a difference when tc is absent from my day? Yes. I don't, I don't I feel it there's just something missing. If I do my set then I'm ok and I go about my business for the rest of the day." [9.2.243-245]

7. TC never becomes repetitive
   7.1) You never learn tc completely
   7.2) As your body responds to what you're doing, it becomes different

INT- Does it ever – now that you know the 108 moves, does it ever get repetitious -
A- No
INT- for you?

A- No, never, cause each time you do it it's different. Each time you do it you find something different, whether it's a different way you've put your foot, or a different way you've moved your body, each time it's different. It never becomes repetitive, although the movements are repetitive, you're learning all the time the nuances, I guess is the word I'm looking for, in each move, that make it different

INT- Hm. That keeps it interesting for you?

A- Keeps it interesting, yeah, yeah. You never learn tc completely, it's always different, it's always a change. And as your body responds to what you're doing, it becomes different, you know. You become more limber so the more limber you become, the more flexible you become, the more different the moves become. So in my case in my shoulder because I couldn't move my [right] shoulder for awhile, now I can move my shoulder now I know that when I put my arm down this way I'm going to pull this muscle here, and, that's changed for me, I can move my arm a different way now, and same with my hips, they are more flexible, and now that they're more flexible, I can move differently, and so therefore it doesn't become repetitive because I'm moving at a different level. And that's having to change everything along the line in my body. So no it doesn't become repetitive, ever, ever, ever! [laughs]

INT- You're quite adamant about that [both laugh]

A- No, never never never never [laughs] Yep. [9.1.868-889]

Anne
Paraphrase List: Lived Experience

1. (TC is) a series of slow, movements, which are almost like a dance

> "I could describe it (TC) as a series of slow, movements, which are almost like a dance..." [9.1.281-282]

2. (TC) is a combination of both (relaxation and meditation)
   2.1) If I'm practising (TC) alone then I get into the relaxation and the meditation
   2.2) I do get it (the relaxation and the meditation) in the class but not as often cause usually something will distract me

INT- Yes. And then, oh yes, this was the thing about physically relaxing, yeah Line 154; it says here that "the physical relaxation quite often comes in with the meditation. It's not the other way around, so that if I'm physically relaxing, trying to get rid of the pain, the meditation doesn't seem to click in but if I'm doing it the other way around then the physical relaxation comes along with the meditation'
A- Yeah, right
INT- It sounds like they're a little bit separate there, you keep them fairly separate when you practise one or the other
A- Yeah, that's right
INT- But then when you actually do tc, what's happening? Cause it sounds to me like you're getting both in
A- I'm getting both in yeah, cause I got to thinking about that one afterwards and when I'm doing tc, especially if I'm doing it alone, cause if I'm doing it in a class it's not quite the same but if I'm doing it alone then I get into the relaxation and the meditation. I do get it in the class but not as often cause usually something will [snaps fingers] you know sort of, distract me. Ok cause in the class there's always somebody doing – like today we forgot where we were going and half of us went one way and the other half went the other way, ok, so this, this can happen. But if I'm practising alone, I get the relaxation and I get the meditation together, not all the time, but you know, enough that it's, it's kinda neat when it happens, ok, so does that clarify it for you?
INT- So for you it really is a combination
A- So yeah, it is a combination of both yeah [9.2.249-270]

3. (TC is) walking meditation - You do the set without thinking, your body just flows with it, and your mind just seems to detach

> "For me (TC) it's walking meditation..." [9.1.267]

   3.1) It doesn't happen all the time
   3.2) It's not something you can make yourself do
   3.3) I'll just get through a set and suddenly say 'I've finished it?" - you lose track of time, you sorta go blank
   3.4) You're aware that you're doing tc, but everything else seems to move off into the background
   3.5) It's almost as if you're in a bubble – there's nothing else around you. It's a timelessness feeling
   3.6) Sometimes you'll come back before you finish the set, like it'll only be a momentary thing within the set, that'll occur

INT- Ok, alright. Um, maybe we’ll talk a bit about what you just said about walking meditation, I thought that’s an interesting term

A- Yeah. I’ve heard that term before and I didn’t understand what they meant by it, you know like walking meditation. But when a person is doing the tc set, especially if you’re doing it in a large group, and the group is together, working together, you do the set without thinking, your body just flows with it, and your mind, your mind just seems to detach. And you just do it without thinking. It’s an amazing experience I can’t explain it any other way! It doesn’t happen all the time, and it will happen occasionally when I’m doing it alone, and I’ll just get through a set and suddenly say ‘I’ve finished it?” You know, I’d I reached a certain point – you lose track of time. You just sort of – you’re outside of time. That’s where the walking meditation bit comes in, because your mind just detaches. It’s the most amazing thing [laughs]

INT- So when you say about your mind detaching, is it fro – your mind detaches from your body, or your mind detaches from -

A- From just whatever you’re doing, you just seem t o lose track of time, I don’t know, you sorta go blank. It’s the most amazing thing.

INT- I’ve heard that from a few people actually. One person he told me that when he does tc he seems to, he said that that he loses time

A- Yeah you lose time

INT- And another person told me that um, the term they used was that they ‘lose the room’

A- Mhm

INT- does that fit for you?

A- Yes it does, yes, I understand exactly what they were saying. It’s it’s, as I say it’s the most amazing experience, and it’s very difficult to put into words, because it’s for each person it’s different obviously, but, yeah ‘losing the room’ is a good one to do too, cause you just sort of, you lose time, you lo – you’re you’re not aware of what’s going on around you, and you’re in your own space [laughs]

INT- When when you’re doing this you said you experience this both with a group as well as by yourself

A- Yeah

INT- When does it happen more frequently would you say? Or is it-

A- It’s about the same – it it doesn’t – as I say it doesn’t happen every time, it’s just once in a while that it happens, at least for me, and it doesn’t matter where I am, whether I am with a group or I’m alone it just happens, yeah

INT- So when you’re doing your tc with a group, and you say your mind detaches, do you actually lose awareness of the people who are around you also doing tc?

A- Yes, yes, yes. You become aware of what you’re doing and yet – how can I explain this – you’re aware that you’re doing tc, but everything else seems to move off into the background there’s nothing there but – you’re in a bubble. You’re in a bubble, that’s what it is. Does that explain it?

INT- I’m just trying to get at

A- It’s almost as if you’re in a bubble you don’t – there’s nothing else around you. It’s a timelessness feeling, really great

INT- Neat

A- Yes, yes, it is.

INT- Do you hear other sounds around you? Like I notice that, like here you can hear some traffic -

A- Oh yeah, no the sounds - nothing

INT- that goes too

A- that goes too. Everything goes

INT- Ok

A- yeah

INT- alright. And so then, when you're finished the tc set what happens?

A- You're back. Nothing – you know, nothing spectacular, nothing, just, you're back that's it. And sometimes, sometimes you'll come back before you finish the set, like it'll only be a momentary thing within the set, that'll occur, like for a certain number of moves or something and then you're back again and you just keep going.

INT- Does this happen at a particular point in time during the set for you? Like can you get into that right from the beginning?

A- No, no. It's not something that you bring on yourself it's something that happens as you're doing it. Like you follow me? Like, I can't say to myself 'ok this is what I'm going to do' It'll only happen – it only happens. It's not something you can make yourself do.

INT- Right.

A- I'd like to be able do [laughs] but, no. I've tried, and it doesn't – the more you try to do it the less it happens. So if you don't try to do it then it'll happen, ok? [9.1.287-352]

3.7) When the timelessness bubble appears, nothing (goes through my mind)

"...when the timelessness bubble appears, nothing (goes through my mind). Just, you just go through it (the TC moves) and then that's it." [9.1.436-437]

3.8) The timelessness the bubble comes in once you've mastered the moves - your body remembers the moves and does the moves so your mind can go elsewhere

A- ...when you reach a certain point, I guess maybe that's when the timelessness the bubble comes in, is - some days, your body remembers the moves your body does the moves and your mind can go elsewhere. So your body's remembering and your mind has nothing to do with what your body's doing your body does it and your mind goes someplace else. Which is why I don't think you can force yourself to do that, to get into that state, because your body has to be able to do it on its own, then your mind can go

INT- Right, interesting

A- It is! It's very interesting, I guess to analyze it, that's where I would put that, is that once you've mastered the moves, there are days when, you can do anything, you can do the moves without thinking about them, and that's when that timelessness bubble crops up. But your body continues to do the moves. Very intriguing

INT- Kind of on automatic almost-

A- Yes

INT- I think someone's told me that

A- Yep, almost, yeah. Really cool [9.1.496-511]

3.9) (Transcendence is) that timelessness bubble, that takes you beyond, off someplace else

INT- OK. Another term that was bantered around by somebody else actually, um when they talked about tc and some of the experiences they have had is that they felt that to them tc was like a way of moving beyond sort of the day to day life, sort of transcending it, day to day existence

A- mhm, mhm

INT- and what do you think about that? Is that something that fits for you or is that not quite right?

A- Only when I'm doing the set. Taking that same feeling, I couldn't have it all day long everyday, because it would just not work, for me anyway. But I can understand what they're talking about. Yeah, but it only happens to me when I'm doing the set

INT- So, but that you feel that that actually does -
A- Oh yeah, it takes me beyond beyond – well that's that timelessness bubble, that takes you beyond, off someplace else [9.1.703-715]

3.10) That's the same, shutting out of the world, the same bubble feeling that I get when I meditate-it's just that I happen to be moving when it happens at tc

INT- Ok. Um, How do you find that - are there some commonalities between that timelessness that you're talking about when you do tc, and when you've done some of the other relaxation-
A- yes
INT- and meditative things?
A- Yes. Yes. It's the same um, for the – not so much for the physical relaxation, but for the meditation, ok. That's the same, shutting out of the world, the same bubble feeling that I get when I meditate. And now, it's just that I happen to be moving when it happens at tc, when I'm sitting and meditating it doesn't move I'm just – that's that's what I'm setting out to do. But in tc it just happens that way and it is the same feeling, yes. The same bubble feeling around you – you're enclosed in a bubble. [9.1.353-363]

3.11) You get into (doing TC) and you forget where you are (in the TC set)

INT- So what do you, when you practise sometimes, do you ever get so into it that you actually forget where you're at?
A- Oh yes, Oh yeah. Oh yeah that's happened a lot of times. You'll even see us in a group here, and some of us will suddenly stumble because we're suddenly- 'where am I' you know 'I've missed something, am I in the right spot' sort of thing. it does happen, you get into it and you forget where you are. [9.1.602-607]

4. There's a whole lot of things to keep in mind while you're doing (TC)
    4.1) (I'm) trying to focus on doing the set correctly - There's the placement of feet and the placement of your body the placement of your arms and shoulders.

> "I'm usually trying to get – trying to focus on doing the set, correctly, cause there's the placement of feet and the placement of your body the placement of your arms and shoulders." [9.1.429-431]

    4.2) you're keeping track of where you are in the set
    4.3) you're keeping track of what the next move is going to be
    4.4) you're keeping track of where you're going to go for the next move -watch out for the people on either side of you

> "...there's a whole lot of things to keep in mind while you're doing it. Even after all these years we, we still have to think. And then, as you go along through the set you're you're keeping track of where you are in the set, what the next move is going to be where you're going to go for the next move watch out for the people on either side of you [laughs] cause some of us have a longer step than others." [9.1.432-436]

5. I can feel where my body is aching and where I need to put a little less stress on the body or a little more stress on the body

> "...I can feel where my body is aching and where I need to put a little less stress on the body or a little more stress on the body, as as I'm working through it (the TC set)..." [9.1.438-441]

> "...in the process of concentrating on where I'm putting my arms and my legs and my body, I can also feel where the pain is coming from so that I can concentrate on that spot and try and get the circulation going there. Doesn't always work, but I can try [9.1.399-402]

5.1) If (the pain is) really bad I'll focus in on it to get rid of it (during TC)
5.2) I focused on those spots that were extremely painful, and, in my mind I was gently stretching the muscles that were tight
5.3) If I'm not in (as much) pain then I'll just detach from it and you know, detach from my body

A- During the Tor Yus and Dan Yus which are the warm up exercises, I focused on those spots that were extremely painful, and, in my mind I was gently stretching the muscles that were tight, and as I did that they actually would loosen up and relax so that I could stretch them a little bit further
INT- Ok, So it is, it is a form of visualization
A- It's a form of visualization so that I can say well if my shoulder's really sore I will sort of, look in my mind – because I've got an anatomy background, I can pinpoint the muscle and stretch it in my mind and then also stretch it, as I'm stretching it in my mind [demonstrates abducting at shoulder]. And that sort of, overcomes the pain that's gonna come from stretching it, ok?
INT- Right. So you've got, you've got a couple things going because you were saying that, when you're doing your tc, be it the warm up or the actual set, you can detach your mind from the pain
A- Mhm
INT- but at the same time sometimes you focus in-
A- Sometimes, if it's really bad I'll focus in on it to get rid of it, so that I, I know that I'm stretching the muscle that's tight – I'll know that it's the muscle and I'm – mentally I'll say 'this is the muscle and this is what I have to do 'kay, 'this is the insertion point this is where it has to stretch' that sort of thing [laughs] ok? So that clears that up?
INT- Yeah that does. Cause I wasn't quite sure it almost sounded like there were, it was a bit of a contradiction cause one – on one hand you were detaching yourself from it -
A- it depends
INT- but on the other hand you're concentrating on it
A- it depends on whether I'm in pain or not if I'm not in pain then I'll just detach from it and you know, detach from my body and the whole bit yeah. And sometimes if it's not bad, I'll detach from it and then it'll go away. But if it's bad, then I have to focus on it so that I can relieve it a little bit before I can detach from it. [9.259-85]

> "...[TC allows me to] detach from the pain that I feel, from the OA [9.1.389-390]

6. If you move the right way (in TC) you can feel the energy moving
   6.1) My hands and my feet, started tingling
   6.2) I could feel the power, the energy, between my hands

INT- Alright. Now I usually ask people whether they have experienced any, kind of unexpected effects, things that have surprised them, about doing tc, over the time that you've been involved

A- I don't know, I don't know if there's been anything surprising or not. Actually yeah, come to think of it, a couple of – about a year and a half ago, when I was doing tc, and uh I was doing it here, and all of a sudden my hands and my feet, started tingling, it was like you couldn't believe, and I sorta stopped, and I could feel the power, the the energy, between my hands – I put my hands together [demonstrates palms of hands facing each other, 6 inches apart] and just feel it, it was just unbelievable it hasn't happened very often since then, but yeah, you can feel when you move if you do it the right way and you're doing it the right way you can feel the energy moving, um, the chi? I guess. They talk about that. But yeah you can feel it in between your hands [laughs]

INT- so that just shocked you -

A- Just shocked me 'ooh, what have I done?' [laughs]

INT- So did – was that explained to you afterwards?

A- Yeah It was explained to me – I knew what it was when it happened, you know, I had read about it before in another book and you know, it was one of those things that 'oh yeah, sure!' [disbelieving tone] but then it happened to me and since then, I have been able to feel it so yeah it's there. [9.1.815-834]

7. The entire room feels like it's filled with energy
    - 7.1) When there've been 50 or 60 people (with enough advanced students) here all doing the same thing it's almost as if, there's an energy flowing in the room that propels you, and it just keeps you going
    - 7.2) You are a part of this group and this group is generating an energy, which you can feel, you know and it's just, it's just all in the entire room

INT- Line 291 Ok this is about the meditation – "when a person is doing the tc set, especially if you're doing it in a large group, and the group is together"

A- "working together" [INT and Anne continue reading the segment silently]

INT- Yeah. How does – tell me more about this – why 'especially in a large group' what's special about that?

A- It's very difficult to explain. It's – I've done tc when they've had a workshop here and there've been 50 or 60 people here all doing the same thing. And it's almost as if, there's an energy in the room that propels you, and it just keeps you going, and – when there's that many people obviously we can't do the same number of moves that we would do if we – if it was a smaller group. Like in some moves we have to do 7 repetitions in one direction, and there's no way you could do that without ending up, especially in the kitchen or something like that [motions to far end of the room]. So somebody will suddenly, you know, say '3 wave hands'. So everybody will s – everybody would just stop and then just turn as a group and they'd go into the next move, and it is the wildest sensation, that you are a part of this group and this group is generating an energy, which you can feel, you know and it's just, it's just all in the entire room.

INT- Ok. Alright. So is it something that's around you, or between you and other people or what

A- It's just it's just everybody it's just around you the entire room feels like it's filled with that energy.

INT- Ok

A- It's an amazing thing – that's in an especially large group

INT- Ok, and when everyone's doing everything together

A- together. Exactly, yeah, yeah

INT- Cause you had talked about some of the distractions when you do it in a small group sometimes

A- When you do it in a small group there's – how can I explain this – when we have the really really large groups doing it, there are more instructors and more advanced students within the group, and they sort of spread themselves around so that everybody has somebody who's more advanced, to follow so therefore there aren't as many distractions. When you have a smaller group, for example our morning group, there's only about 4 or 5 of us who have done it long enough that we can do it without having to think and everybody else is at a sort of semi-beginner level – they've finished the Beginners' but they haven't been doing it very long and therefore they're a little more, hesitant, they don't know the entire set so they will be the one's that distract us, and we have to say ' we're doing this' you know so therefore we take care of them make sure they get through the set ok. So this is the difference between a great big group or a smaller group.

INT- Ok. Its that doing it in unison it sounds like

A- Mhm, mhm, yeah

INT- Ok. Yeah, I've heard that from someone else too they talked about sort of this energy

A- the energy flowing it's just amazing you feel 'whoa! Great! [laughs] [9.2.298-340]

8. With the tc you're using your brain to focus on something that's physical within your body
    - 8.1)I may lose sense of time if I'm doing something intricate (with a paintbrush, or cross-stitch), but it's not going to get rid of my pain, it's probably going to get worse
    - 8.2)I think if you immerse yourself in anything, it can lead to some introspection or this sort of thought pattern, which you do with tc, but not to the same extent because you're also using your brain to focus on something which is not physical, whereas with the tc you're using your brain to focus on something that's physical within your body

INT- Ok. Well think about some of the other activities that you do, for example walking the dog

A- Um. Walking the dog and -

INT- or some of your crafts. Do you get the same sensation?

A- As I do when I'm doing tc? Yes. Yeah

INT- Do you get the same sense of timelessness sometimes?

A- Sometimes I do yes, especially if I'm doing something intricate with a paintbrush, or uh, um doing some intricate cross stitch, it's, I tend to lose myself in what I'm doing, sort of block out the rest of the world. And so yes it does, one sort of falls into the other, or they mesh or whatever, whatever you want to call it [laughs]

INT- Ok. Sure. When you do some of those activities, do you also find that you can use those to manage your pains symptoms or your stress symptoms?

A- The stress yes, not the pain, no. Because if I'm sitting doing, if I'm painting or if I'm doing cross stitch or something like that, I tend to be tensed up, because, you know, you're trying to do x number of stitches, x number of cross stitches [laughs] in one spot or something like that, and you're paying attention – you can still lose yourself in it, but I tend to tense up a little bit more than if I'm say walking the dog. Walking the dog, if it's a physical thing it's ok, when I'm sitting and doing something that's intricate I may lose sense of time, but nevertheless it's not going to get rid of my pain, it's probably going to get worse, if anything else.

INT- Hunching over everything, right?

A- Hunching over, exactly.

INT- And have you found that any of those other activities you've been doing, has that led to some of the um, I guess emotional, mental, spiritual, changes for you that you have just talked about with tc?

A- Um, not to the same degree. Um, I think if you immerse yourself in anything, it can lead to some introspection or this sort of thought pattern, which you do with tc, but not to the same extent because you're also using your brain to focus on something which is not physical, whereas with the tc you're using your brain to focus on something that's physical within your body. When I'm painting or when I'm sewing, I'm focusing on something that's outside of my body, which is slightly different. And so, um, yeah, you can get the same mental construct, but you're focusing on something different, there's a different focus, it's not a focus on yourself it's a focus on something else external. I don't know if that explains it or not, but it gives you some idea.

INT- Yeah, I just wanted to see if you saw much of a difference between the two-

A- Yeah, there is a difference, yeah. I can still lose myself in something that I'm doing but there's – it's not the same as when I lose myself in tc. [9.1.666-702]

9. I think I'm more relaxed (doing TC) outdoors - I like being outside - it's a little more peaceful outside for me

INT- Ok. Alright. And then you mentioned to me that there was something particularly nice about being outdoors, just as a general rule for you

A- Yeah, and doing tc outdoors is just an extension of that because I like being outside, I just like being outside. So yeah, just something to do outside. [9.2.377-380]

A- I think I'm more relaxed outdoors. Indoors there's always you know, the dog is there, and the phone rings, or, my husband comes in and interrupts me in the middle of my set or something. When I'm outdoors nobody interrupts me. So I think that's mainly it, it's just that it's a little more peaceful outside for me. [9.2.398-401]

Anne
Paraphrase List: Perceived Outcomes

1. (TC) allows me to move and at the same time detach from the pain that I feel, from the OA [physical/mental]
   1.1) The more I did (the TC exercises), the less pain I had
   1.2) When we did finish TC, the pain was at a bearable level

> "Today, I woke up, I was really sore. My neck hurt, my shoulder hurt my back hurt my leg hurt my hip hurt. Ok, it hurt all down one side and that's the effect of the OA. And I thought ' I really don't wanna go to tc this morning, but I'm going to go' So I came here. And I thought 'I don't know if I can do the exercises but I'm going to try' So, I started doing the exercises you know the warm up exercises we do Dan Yus (deep knee bends) and Tor Yus (forward lunges) – you know what they are? Ok, yep. And we do some upper body warm-ups, little exercises. So we did the upper body, we did the DanYus, we did the Tor Yus. And, as I was doing them, the more I did them, the less pain I had. And it wasn't just because I was moving, it was because I was removing myself from the sensation of pain, because I was concentrating on doing my exercises in the proper form. As soon as we stopped and we were discussing what our next um practise session was going to be, the pain came back. As soon as we started doing the set, I had to concentrate on where I was putting my feet where I was moving, and the pain disappeared again. And in the process of moving, I also loosened everything up, so that when we did finish, the pain was at a bearable level. So that, in order to do the set, I had to overcome the feelings of pain, and so I detached from them and this is what tc does for me, is it allows me to move and at the same time detach from the pain that I feel, from the OA. [9.1.374-390]

   1.3) TC has kept me limber, flexible

> "Well it's it's – the physical part of it (TC) has helped me with the OA, the keeping, keeping my joints loose so that they don't seize up, and helping me get rid of the pain." [9.1.514-515]
>
> "(TC movements) stretch all the muscles, and the joints, and they keep you flexible." [9.1.83-84]

   1.4) If I hadn't been doing tc, I would probably be walking with a cane right now because of the OA in my hip, and in my back

> "...I found that with the tc, even though I'm not running as much as in you know from here to there, the tc has kept me physically, not active, but limber, flexible. It's kept – if I hadn't been doing tc – I'll do it the other way – If I hadn't been doing tc, I would probably be walking with a cane right now. Kay, because of the OA in my hip, and in my back. [9.1. 470-474] [deleted text]

2. (TC's) a way of becoming familiar with my body – it's just enhanced that feeling of proprioception, knowing where your body is in space

"(TC) it's also a way of becoming familiar with my body..." [9.1.267]

INT- We talked about a way to become familiar with your body so that when there's something wrong with it you're more aware. So, would another term for that – does that make sense to you?
A- Yeah, sure, physically in tune with my body, sure great.
INT- The reason I asked you that was because after describing this you said you thought there was a word for it but you weren't sure what it was and I was wondering if it came to you afterwards
A- Um yeah proprio -
INT- proprioception
A- That's the one
INT- Like knowing -
A- Knowing where your body is in space. That's the one
INT- Ok, ok
A- Yeah, that's the one
INT- So for you, that's one of the things that tc has done for you is it?
A- It's it's it hasn't done it for me because I was always aware of it, it's just enhanced that feeling. Cause as a ballet dancer, you have to know where you're body is in space and that's something I've carried over from my ballet. But this has enhanced it somewhat more because obviously when I did ballet I was young, I quit doing it when I was 12, and so, this is just sort of, brought it back out, enhanced it, ok?
INT- Ok right. So you feel like your proprioception is enhanced and at the same time, you feel like you're more in tune with what's going on inside-
A- inside
INT- your body
A- right [9.2.273-297]

2.1) When there is something wrong with my body, I'm more aware of it

> "...when there is something wrong with my body, I'm more aware of it because I'm more aware of what my body feels like. You follow what I'm saying. In other words I know what my body feels like when it's healthy, so that when there's something going on inside that wrong, I can feel it. If I'm doing tc and something doesn't feel right and I have to stop and think 'why does that not feel right? Is there something wrong? Is my diverticulosis acting up? Or Is my circulation not what it should be?" because if my hands are cold and they don't get warm when I'm doing tc then I know there is something pinching the nerve, or something like that." [9.1.268-276]

3. At the end of a set, I usually feel relaxed, and tired

> "...at the end of a set, I usually feel relaxed, and tired because it is hard work [laughs] At the end of the second set I really feel tired sometimes I'm sweating there are several of us in the class who end up sweating, from doing this." [9.1.454-456]

4. My heartbeat has hit a very high level, but it goes back to normal very quickly

A- My heartbeat has hit, no doubt, a very high level, but it drops very quickly too, so that it goes back to normal very quickly.

INT- have you ever measured it?
A- Yes I have. I've hit my target beat at a hundred – what is it it 144, doing tc, and within a half a minute after quitting it's back to normal. My normal heartbeat is around 68
INT- Ok so you took your peak one when you were doing it were you?
A- Yeah [9.1.456-463]

5. I have far better lung capacity than I had before

> "I have far better lung capacity than I had before, because you breathe – you learn to breathe with the movements that you're doing. And because you're keeping you're body upright it expands your chest, you expand your chest with the movements that you do..." [9.1.478-481]

6. I have a lot more stamina than I used to have, even though I was more physically active before
   6.1) I have a lot more stay-with-it power just to carry on day to day (e.g. Running up and down stairs, walking the dog, general housework, gardening)

> "Yeah and it's – I find that I have a lot more stamina than I used to have, even though I was more physically active before, like, before I ever started this." [9.1.465-466]

INT- Ok, alright. Um, you mentioned that tc gives you, has given you you know, sort of like more stamina.
A- Mhm
INT- At what point do you notice that – is it in some things that you do day to day?
A- Yeah, the day to day, just running up and down stairs all the time, and walking the dog, you know, take her for a long walk everyday and, um, general housework cause we have a large house and it takes a lot of house – you know housekeeping to keep it clean, and uh, gardening and stuff like that so yeah, I have a lot more stamina, I have a lot more stay-with-it power.
INT- Ok, just to be able to carry on-
A- just to carry on day to day, yeah [9.1.716-726]

7. The meditation aspect of the tc plus my meditation has lessened all the stress
8. The diverticulosis has sort of calmed down

A- With the diverticulosis, that was stress-induced, ok [INT and A check tape] that was stress induced and when some of the stress in my home life disappeared, plus the meditation aspect of the tc plus my meditation has lessened all the stress then the diverticulosis has sort of calmed down, I'll always have it, but as long as I can keep from getting too stressed out, then it doesn't bother me – then it doesn't turn into an irritable bowel, which is what happens
INT- It's really a combination -
A- It's a combination
INT- the situation improving as well as having some coping -
A- coping steps-
INT- which is what you're using -
A- coping strategies, yep. And this is part of it, tc is part of it [9.1.514-527]

9. I haven't had one of those bad migraines for a year and a half now, almost 2 years

9.1)I found that as soon as I started with the tc, the less stress I was feeling (and) the migraines started to get less and less and less

INT- you had mentioned for you that one thing you hadn't told me about last time
A- was the migraine headaches. Because I haven't had one in 2 years, and I'm not talking just a run o- I get the migraine headaches where I end up in the hospital, do the Demerol and Gravol and, it's so bad that somebody has to scoop me up and drive me to the hospital to get a pain killer. I haven't had one of those in 2 years. And prior to that they were, they were starting to get less and less, and I found that as soon as I started with the tc, the less stress in my life – the less stress that I was feeling, the migraines started to get less and less and less and as I say, I haven't had one of those bad ones for a year and a half now, almost 2 years.
INT- That must be a relief
A- It is. A distinct relief cause I was, I was having them quite often like, 2 or 3 a month where I'd end up at the hospital and of course every time you go in, it's not so bad now, um, but every time you go in of course they check you for drug usage and they check your arms for drug tracks and your legs and you go through the whole neurological thing where they flash the lights in you eyes which is the last thing you want when you have a migraine headache. So now it's not so bad because they know me at the MHE and I'm on their migraine list so that when I have one I go in the Dr. checks the list and 'yes ok you've got it' and they give me my shot and I go home! So but as I said – knock on wood- I haven't had one for almost 2 years.
INT- And you've really lived with that for most of your life
A- I've lived with that since I was 13. Prior to that I had what – something they call abdominal migraine – as a child. Um it, it's n upset stomach where you throw up for 24 hours and then you're fine. We never knew what it was but I found out later, about 10 15 years ago, that this is what they call abdominal migraine in a child. And so obviously I've had it for, probably all my life, but I didn't start getting the real bad headaches until I was 13, 14 years old. And I've lived with them ever since. And I've been through all the neurological tests and everything else and they just say 'oh yes you've got migraines' and 'we'll try this on you' or 'we'll try that' or 'we'll try this' so, yeah [9.2.413-441]

10. (Doing a mental TC set is) also good at night when you're trying to get to sleep if you can't get to sleep – It's better than counting sheep!

A- Mhm, Mhm, It's (doing a mental TC set) also good a t night when you're trying to get to sleep if you can't get to sleep [laughs]
INT- Do you do it when you're lying in bed?
A Yeah I do it in my mind then too, yeah
INT- I've heard of someone told -
A It's better than counting sheep! [laughs]
INT- Little more interesting [both laugh]
A Little more interesting, exactly
INT- Do you ever get through the whole thing -
A No
INT- before you fall asleep?
A No no, get about half way through and I'm pfsst, out [9.1.590-601]

11. TC is part of my coping strategies - (has) allowed me to get in touch with myself and that self is very stress resistant [Emotional]

"...coping strategies, yep. And this is part of it, tc is part of it" [9.1.527]

11.1) (TC) does tend to relax me, mentally – it's a trigger to relax me when I'm in a semi-stressful situation

"...I do find a relaxation from it, whether it's short term or long term, it does tend to relax me, mentally. [9.1.484-486]

11.2) When I'm in a stressful situation, I can sort of stop for a minute, take a deep breath, and say, 'this is not going to bother me as much as it would have'

INT- Do you ever feel there is any effect as far as being able to make – I don't know, some of the things you're doing, the meditation, the tc, helping you be more stress-resistant, if you want to call it that?

A- Yes, yes, they do make you more stress resistant, because you [pause]- how can I put this- because when you're doing something like tc or you're meditating, you're getting in touch with yourself, with your inner self, the person you are, and that person's usually very very strong. With added stress and you know outside things that happen to you, quite often that person gets lost in the shuffle. And so for myself I've found that this has, the tc and the meditation have allowed me to get in touch with myself and that self is very stress resistant. And so when I feel the situation's becoming very stressful, I can search within myself and find that, spark if you will, that is stress resistant, and the tc and the meditation have allowed me to do that, they have, they have pointed where the s- where that little spark is. And so when I'm in a stressful situation, I can sort of stop for a minute, take a deep breath, and say, 'this is not going to bother me as much as it would have' It may still bother me, but I can resist having it bother me quite so much. Ok? [9.1.531-546]

11.3) I can sit there and I can do a (mental) tc set, and that will lead on to other things, you know, what, what's been stressing me lately

INT- That was interesting. Someone else I spoke with had mentioned that that problems for them, seemed to feel a little less burdensome, when they do tc, what do you think about that?

A- Yeah. I'd agree with that one, because, as I say, when you're doing tc, I guess – and the meditation – you're concentrating on yourself, and what you're doing. And that's always to the good. And, if you're concentrating on yourself, you can, you can find those strengths that are in you. It may not happen during a set, you know, like a tc set, but quite often – I don't know if other people do but I know I do if I'm if I'm waiting, I throw in an example if I'm waiting in the doctor's office and I don't have a book to read and you know what magazines are like in a doctor's office – I will mentally go through a tc set, do the set in my head, and that again is a form of, I guess meditation, because it it allows me to relax, and it allows me to get in touch with myself, and it's quite intriguing to do that, when you're sitting and you have nothing else to do or you're waiting for something or someone. And it's it's, it helps me get in touch with myself. I don't get stressed out if I have to sit and wait now. Cause I can sit and you know, instead of thinking about how long it's taking for the doctor to get through with their other patients I can sit there and I can do a tc set, and that will lead on to other things, you know, what, what's been stressing me lately, 'ok that's not important this is important maybe I'd better think about this one' it's almost a form of meditation. But yet I'm aware of what's going on around me, it's just thought patterns that go through my head.

INT- Oh ok

A- But it starts off with 'I'm bored, I'll just do a mental tc set' I don't know if other people do it, some people may some people may not but you know, it's just something I've found as a a trigger to relax me when I'm in a semi-stressful situation. [9.1.559-583]

12. I find that (TC) helps, with my memory – it's one of those things that exercises your brain [Mental (Memory)]

> "And the other thing I've noticed is that it kept my memory, because I have to keep remembering 108 moves, it's one of those things that exercises your brain. It does, it does, because you have to remember the 108 moves in a sequence. And most of us don't have to remember that much all at once. So as you get older, I find that it helps, with my memory. I hope it's not losing my memory, but you know, you understand what I'm trying to say, is that it does help."[9.1.486-491]

12.1) I've tuned a portion of my brain to accept anything that has to be done in sequence, which is kinda neat (e.g. computer)

A- Well I can remember a whole lot more than I used to!

INT- Is that right?

A- Yeah, it you know, in sort of in sequence, as long I have to remember something in sequence. I guess maybe it's just because I have to remember the set in sequence so therefore I've tuned a portion of my brain to accept anything that has to be done in sequence, which is kinda neat

INT- Any particular examples?

A- Well, when I'm working on the computer, there are certain things that you have to do in sequence. And I can do them without thinking – my husband on the other hand, can't, and he's always calling me ' where do I go now?' and I can run it through my brain and remember these things, whereas, you know it's not something that normally I would remember because I don't work on the computer as a regular thing. It's not something that I do everyday. But I can remember these sequences so obviously somewhere along the line I've remembered something, or it's it's connected something in there? Yeah [9.2.349-363]

13. TC is a gentle way of leading me into myself to find out what I believe [Spiritual]

13.1) I think tc it puts you in touch with yourself, as a practise. When you do a physical exercise that requires that you, pay attention to yourself and what your body is doing, it also makes you pay attention to what your mind is thinking. And that can lead you, in, further into a spiritual quest – at least it did for me

13.2) For people who are searching I think it (tc) can lead them, into a further study – not necessarily of Buddhism or Taoism, but into their own spirituality

13.3) (TC) has led me into the search of other religions

INT- Have there – have you had any sort of I guess what you might call, just in a general way, sort of spiritual uh benefits or things that you feel have happened for you? And I mean that in the most general sense not specifically to religion

A- Um [pause] yeah I think so. Tc's uh, you know we do it as an exercise it's not promoted as a religion or as any part of any religion so we'll get that out of the way. But I think as as people get older they start to look for some spirituality, whether it is in an organized religion or not. And I think tc because it puts you in touch with yourself, as a practise, leads you into what um, or leads you towards what it is you're looking for? Do you follow me?

Do you understand? Like it it if as an older person I am looking for 'what does it all mean' sort of thing , you know that type of spirituality, tc is a gentle way of leading me into myself to find out what I believe. Does that clarify it?

INT- A little bit

A- A little bit – It's kind of hard to put put a finger on it – It's kind of hard to describe. Because everybody is searching, and tc is simply a physical exercise, but when you do a physical exercise that requires that you, pay attention to yourself and what your body is doing, it also makes you pay attention to what your mind is thinking. And that can lead you, in, further into a spiritual quest – at least it did for me. I'm not a member if any organized religion, and I probably never will be again. Because I've gone beyond that sort of – for myself – I've gone beyond the organized religion. Um what I'm going after, I have absolutely no idea but tc has led me into reading on, because I wanted to find out more about the Taoist arts, and because I had a – as a teenager I had some interest in Buddhism, so this has brought it back to some extent, not to the point where I have become a Buddhist, but it has led me into the search of other religions to see what they – but that is my own, my own personal view on it. Other people may not see it that way. But some people – for instance, for people who are searching I think it can lead them, into a further study – not necessarily of Buddhism or Taoism, but into their own spirituality. But the person has to be open to that and whether other people would do it I don't know.

INT- Well, you talked about getting in touch with your inner self and when you started to talk about that , that's started sounding, to me, a little bit like some sense of spirituality

A- Yeah, it is. It's difficult to articulate some of these things you know, they're rolling around in your head but, quite often they're hard to articulate.

INT- Well, I was just curious I like asking that question just to know whether or not people have – it gives me a bit of an idea about how people see tc because I think it can be seen on many levels

A- Yes

INT- just as a ph- purely as a physical exercise, or as something more than that

A- Well this is why I say it would depend on the person. If they're searching then this would lead them to search further, simply because you get in touch with yourself. But if you're not interested in that well it's not going to make any difference one way or the other it's strictly a physical exercise

INT- So you don't feel there's a conflict between -

A- No, I don't see that there is, no. And as I say here, tc is promoted as health, and exercise and has nothing to do with religion, it's only if you chose to look into it that you look into it. And that's why as I say, it depends on the person. If the person's searching, then this will lead them, to search in places where they might not have thought of searching, because they're looking in to themselves. Even exercise can be done on many levels, so it depends on how you do the the exercise [9.1.611-659]

RA
Paraphrase List: TC Initiation

1. I was having a lot of trouble with my knees
2. (My wife said) 'well you should maybe try (tc) or look into it'

INT- Right. Ok. Um, well maybe what we'll do is get into a little bit of maybe you could tell me a bit about how you actually got started in tc?
RA- Uh yeah. I was having a lot of trouble with my knees there, I was still working but and my wife was nursing over at Canterbury Court, and some people came over there and did a demo. And she said 'well you should maybe try that or look into it anyway'. . [10.1.102-108]

3. I came down here (to the TC class) and watched (the TC group) do a set
    3.1) I decided 'well, yeah it would be worth a try' - If it didn't work out well, you haven't lost anything

> "So I came down here (to the TC class) and watched them (the group) do a set and decided 'yeah, that'd be worth giving it a try'. And I, that's how I got started." [10.1.102-108]

> "...I thought 'well, yeah it would be worth a try' if it didn't work out well, you haven't lost anything but you've tried something. And if you know you've tried and you feel it's not right well then you could say 'well yeah but I tried'". [10.1.139-141]

> "So I came down here and watched them do a set and decided 'yeah, that'd be worth giving it a try'. And I, that's how I got started" [10.1.107-108]

    3.2) I thought 'well, yeah, I could probably do that' because it's not like some of the other martial arts that are vicious and fast and, lot of body contact.
    3.3) I saw all these people moving together in really close unison

> "Well, it was actually an ongoing class that I had watched. And there was a lot of people, it was a big class at that time. And I saw all these people moving together, uh in un- you know, really close unison, and I could watch the movements and I thought 'well, yeah, I could probably do that' because it's not like uh, uh, some of the other martial arts that are vicious and fast and, lot of body contact." [10.1.134-141]

    3.4) I liked the way the moves were controlled

INT- okay, right, hm. [pause] What do you like about tc? Can you tell me a bit about that, like when you first saw it, what was it that you liked about it?
RA- [pause] Oh, I liked the way the moves were controlled [10.2.156-158; verified 10.2.49-54]

    3.5) (I liked) the idea of being able to join in a group and move with them, and, feel that relaxed while you were doing it

INT- It says here on line 134 it says – I was asking you about um about how you felt about tc when you saw that first demonstration and it says "... there was a lot of people, it was a big class at that time. And I saw all these people moving together...in...really close unison..." And, I was just wondering, if when you first watched that tc class, uh was there something special about about seeing this large group, playing in unison, that made an impression on you? Just because you mentioned it but I didn't know if that was...

RA- [pause] Yeah, the, it'd be similar to watching like a group of dancers and uh, like the Zyrus dancers or, you know how coordinated they are and – you know, the tap-dancing thing- but with the tc, the slower movements and the uh relaxed – I got the feeling that they were more relaxed that they were – you know they weren't like under stress. And just the idea of being able to do that, being able to join in a group and and move with them, and and, feel that relaxed while you were doing it – cause most things you do in a group you always, you know "am I doin' it right?" " what are the other people thinking" and so on. Whereas in tc they tell you you don't worry about, what other people think because we're all learning at a different speed. So, and if you make a mistake, you should hear B__ (instructor) when she makes a mistake – it's real humorous.

INT- is it?

RA- yeah

INT- Oh Alright, so it was really just that – just being able to see everybody being relaxed in a group while they're all doing this activity-

RA- Yep [10.2.27-48]

4. It was close to home

INT- Um now, when you had started tc um, you had started at this location you told me

RA- Yep

INT- And um can you tell me what it is about, why is it you started at the west end location?

RA- It was close to home

INT- oh ok. That's fine yep

RA- And uh, if I didn't for some reason, I couldn't get the car going or something, I can take the bus

INT- Oh ok

RA- so get off at the terminal yes

INT- it's convenient then

RA- yeah it's about a 10-minute drive [10.2.15-25]

RA
Paraphrase List: TC Continuation

1. My wife started to take (TC) with me; having her do something with you that she really enjoys is a real plus

RA- ...after I'd been taking it for about a year, my wife started to take it with me. She of course had to take the beginner class and then come into the same class. She still comes to all the classes now. So that's kinda good... [10.1.158-161]

RA- And of course, my wife likes it because the classes that we attend are, are a lot of women in there, and she likes, you know, when we take that tea break, then she talks to all the women, so. And having her do something with you that she really enjoys is a real plus.

INT- Right. No it's nice to be able to do something together I guess

RA- Yeah. She doesn't touch the LH but I can understand that, but yeah, she really likes coming to – gets upset if we can't make it [10.1.167-173]

2. Every time I go (to the Dr.) he asks me you know ' you still doin' tc'; he does encourage tc
    2.1) I get the impression from him that, TC's helped my overall physical being in some way

RA- ...the Dr. used to take, tc at one time, so every time I go he asks me you know ' you still doin' tc' and I said 'yeah'. And I get the impression from him that, that 's helped in some way, you know, my overall physical uh being in some way, that 's the impression that I get from him, cause actually, I'm in pretty good shape other than, you know, well I have to take that medication, you know, don't have any real problems now, it's it's really a treat you know [10.1.442-447]

INT- Ok. It sounds like your Dr. is uh – does he encourage you to keep up with tc?

RA- Oh yeah. He uh I think he would encourage anything but he does encourage tc. Uh he says he hasn't got time for it but, he knows the value of it, he took enough, he took it long enough to realize how much it can do for, your body anyway, he never took – got into it enough to maybe understand the spiritual part of it [10.1.460-464]

3. Now that we're retired, TC gives the week some kind of focus

RA- now that we're retired, we have a lot of time on our hands, and this is one thing that gives the week some kind of focus, you know, like, if I didn't come here, 2 uh, mornings a week, I'd probably sleep odd hours and this kind gives the week some kinda unity – or, kinda not standardizes it but, you know, makes it uh -

INT- sounds like it gives you a bit of structure or something

RA- Yeah, that's the word, structure yeah, it gives your whole life some structure. [10.1.161-167]

4. I had some idea of accomplishment
    4.1) I can, do it with, a certain amount of flowing

INT- what is it you like the best about practising tc?

RA- I think the one thing that I uh is that I started out to do this, and it was a very difficult, for me, uh, I guess because of the pain in my knees when I was learning, but I, I stuck to it and I've accomplished to be able to do it at least reasonably well. I'm no expert or anything like that, don't get me wrong, but, I can, do it with, a certain amount of flowing and a certain – and the fact that I've accomplished that is, I think it is, for me that's really something.

INT- Right, you had talked about a sense of achievement

RA- Yeah it is. [10.1.604-612]

INT- what helped you continue the tc class even though it was difficult and painful you at the beginning? Cause I know you certainly stressed that for you it took a long time to learn, and there was a lot of discomfort for you.

RA- Yeah I don't know I still got, even at that point I had some idea of accomplishment maybe... [10.2.59-64]

5. I thought 'well, it's gonna be good for my health' (in first year)
    - 5.1) (I thought) 'one year wasn't gonna do it'
    - 5.2) (I thought) 'I can feel some benefits after the first year'

> "...there were times when I didn't wanna do it. But I thought 'well, it's gonna be good for my health, and I'm having all these problems and maybe I should give it a try, and one year wasn't gonna do it" and you know 'I can feel some benefits after the first year', sticking to it and uh getting to where I am now which is, beginning to learn, just beginning to learn" [10.1.612-616]

6. I feel really good when I do TC (ongoing & early on)

    - 6.1) I Felt Better (early on)
    - 6.2) It kept your mind off work, off everything for awhile

INT- what helped you continue the tc class even though it was difficult and painful you at the beginning? Cause I know you certainly stressed that for you it took a long time to learn, and there was a lot of discomfort for you.

RA- ...even then I felt better, even when I was still learning, uh, not like I do now but, it was uh, it kept your mind off work for awhile, off everything for awhile you know [10.2.59-66]

INT- ...you've been practising for 11 years, so how come you've stayed with it? What is it about it?

RA- Well, outside of getting things, getting my body more flexible, and then, becoming aware of how it works on the internal organs, which you know, they don't tell you when you start, and I thought 'well yeah, that might help' you know because I have some other things I do that aren't too good [laughs] and this might help a bit so, and I feel really good when I do it, you know, like I don't know how other people that are 70 feel, but I feel really good, 'cept, some things I can't do but, actually, you know, general overall feeling at all times is really good. [10.1.249-257]

7. (TC's) always an ongoing, learning system
    - 7.1) you have to judge that by watching the senior instructors and compare
    - 7.2) there's very few moves that you can't improve on
    - 7.3) the more you work on (TC), the more it opens up to you

INT- So, tell me after doing tc for so long, what keeps it uh, does it ever get boring for you? Does it ever get repetitious?

RA- Yeah, some days, uh [pause] warm up exercises get to be a drag, but you do them – but there again if you're feeling better, they go easier. And, when the instructor's going over a move, you've gone over this many times, many many times, you begin to think well, you know, you probably know that as well as she does, or something, and then you say 'hey, wait a minute, that's not the way to think' and then you start thinkin' 'well, see now you're not payin' attention that's what's wrong'. And you see that the instructor has learned something, through her practise and her coming to these Friday night, uh, instructor programs, that she's learned a little, something a little different. Now if you're really careful, you can see what she's doing, and she may not be aware of it, now that's the other hard part, but, having done it so many times with that woman instructor you can say 'yeah, she's improved that step' and then, make a judgment as to whether it's a definite improvement or whether it's just a different, phase. So, you have to judge that by watching the senior instructors and compare. So, if you can do that, that keeps your interest up. Cause there's very, actually there's very few moves that you can't improve on. Either because you understand them better, or you've been shown, a little different way, which, when I say improve them I mean improve the benefit of them you know, the stretch and so on. So there's very few that you can't always improve on. And if you keep that in mind I think uh, it kinda cuts down on the boredom. Like everything else uh, you can't always focus like you want to and, these things seep and slip in you know.

INT- Yeah, cause I was sort of wondering what is it that kept it interesting for you, after such a long time, cause you learned the 108 moves and this is what you practise so, yeah, I wondered what kept it interesting

RA- yeah well there's never, there's no end to it you see. And, some of these things, moves, you're not capable of doing them at one point, because you don't have enough of the, physical skill or, uh, looseness kind of thing, or, mentally you don't understand it as you should. So with these things, like the more you work on it, the more it opens up to you. And, the more you understand, it's like everything else, the more you know about it, you realize how little you know. So it's always a, an ongoing, learning system. But there's days when you just don't wanna learn, you know you think 'nah'. But if you can get into that frame of mind then you, you can pick up [10.1.514-546]

RA
Paraphrase List: Lived Experience

1. I can always tell, what kind of a set it's gonna be, for me, when I do the first bow I can tell how loose my back is, and how loose my hips are, right then [body]

INT- Ok. Can you tell me a bit about um, what it feels like for you when you practise like when you're doing the set, can you walk me through a bit, how that happens for you? What do you do from the start of the set to the end of the set? How does it feel, what do you think about, and so on?

RA- [pause] Well a lot depends on on how stiff I am, or if I'm really loose. And then I can always tell, what kind of a set it's gonna be, for me, when I do the first bow. I can tell how loose my back is, and how loose my hips are, very early – right, right then. And if I get a good feeling there, then I try to uh, become more relaxed during the set...[10.1.258-265]

2. I'm looking for that extra feeling (of stretch) [body]

RA- The days that you don't get that feeling (of doing tc without thinking) and you're kinda concentrating, I still try to get that extra feeling that some of the senior instructors talk about

INT- What's that?

RA- Well there's some stretches that uh, that I don't feel. And uh they say it's because I haven't developed that far yet. So I'm looking for these,

INT- can you give me an example of that?

RA- Yeah, the one we were doing a week ago, it was just in the warm up there, the Tor Yus. Uh, I the instructor was talking about uh, that when you do the Tor Yus when you go back you continue to go back, not down. He said if you can do that, you'll get a different feeling a different stretch. So, I had been doing it pretty well that way, and then when I mentioned to him 'yeah I can get that stretch in the front leg, I can feel that all the way from, not from my foot like he said, but from the from the calf, right up to the hip joint, but I can't feel a stretch from my hip up to my chest muscles on that side, I can't feel that stretch. And her said 'you're just not ready for it'. So, when I come to something like that I watch for it, you know, I'll say 'did I do it a little bit different now that I felt that little, felt it a little bit?' and then try to remember what you did so that, the next time you can try to get that same feeling again.

INT- Ok. So it sounds like you're concentrating on those couple of moves that you work on, you're really concentrating on how you're body's feeling, and whether you're getting the results that you hear about from the instructor, is that right?

RA- Yeah

3. I feel really good when I do TC - Your body just feels good [physical]

> "...your body's doin' all this stuff and it just feels good. You let it go" [10.1.356-357]
>
> LE "...I feel really good when I do it (TC), you know, like I don't know how other people that are 70 feel, but I feel really good, 'cept, some things I can't do but, actually, you know, general overall feeling at all times is really good. [10.1.249-257]

4. I always try to remember all the things (the instructors) tell you (when I'm doing the TC set) [mind]

> "...I always try to remember all the things that they keep telling you and it's very difficult." [10.1.266]

4.1) There's always 2 or 3 moves that I'm not satisfied with and I'm working on myself
4.2) I try to watch someone more experienced than I am

> "...there's always one or 2 moves that I'm not satisfied with, myself, like the way I do them so, if there's someone there more experienced than I am – uh I don't mean by years but I, their ability – then when we get to those 2 moves I try to be in a position where I can watch them, do these. There's always 2 or 3 moves like that, that I'm working on myself." [10.1.267-271]

5. Your mind is functioning but it's really free [mind]
   5.1) (TC) becomes such a habit that your body can do it, and your brain is now, free
   5.2) I don't plan it, it just happens
   5.3) Sometimes your mind is almost blank
   5.4) I think that's where "moving meditation" would come in - It's like meditation would be I think if I could do meditation

RA- And you learn these exercises in this order, and then, if you do it enough times, it becomes such a habit that your body can do it, and your brain is now, free. I don't ever go a (whole) set that way, but, sometimes I go quite a ways with it – I don't I don't plan it, it just happens.
INT- Ok. What goes through your mind at that point in time? Are you thinking about anything?
RA- ...sometimes, it's almost, almost blank. Which uh, I relate to the thought that I heard, someone told me that, 'that's moving meditation'. And I think that's where that would come in. [10.1.313-322]

INT- So this must be kind of a nice experience for you or kind of a novel experience for you then having your mind feel free
RA- Yeah it is, I think it would be for anybody, no matter what they did cause uh, even in yoga there, we tried uh, meditating and, the best I could do was meditate through a picture image, to, focus your mind on this particular scene or whatever and you could really let the rest of it go. With this tc, you don't have to that at all
INT- Like you don't find that you have to picture anything in your mind
RA- No, it's just uh, like meditation would be I think if I could do meditation I think that's what it would be like. Sitting down and trying to meditate it just never worked for me. [10.1.387-195]

5.5) It happens only when I'm in the middle of the group

> "(moving meditation state happens) only when I'm in the middle of the group. When you're on the end you realize others are watching you. You lose that pressure – no pressure really – when you're in the middle of the group because if you get out of step you can follow somebody else." [10.fieldnote2.16-20]

5.6) Like dream state

5.7) You're not as aware of (people and sounds around you) as you normally would be but you can still pick (them) up

INT- you said sometimes you're mind just goes blank almost.
RA- Yeah it's uh [pause] it's, well you could think of it as – like dream state. And, but there's no real intensity to it. You're just very lightly, very light mode, and your body's doin' all this stuff and it just feels good. You let it go. I mean what's the good of havin' a good feeling if you can't enjoy it eh [laughs]
INT- ok. At that point in time, are you still aware of the people around you or other sounds – like I hear traffic sounds out here so I'm assuming that when you're doin' when you're practising there's still that going on – are you aware of these things?
RA- Yeah, not not, as much as you normally would be but, it's you can still pick it up. Like if you wanted to, you could eliminate – at that point you could eliminate any particular outside sensation you wanted and leave the rest, I think you could be that selective
INT- Really
RA- I think so, I've never tried it but I'll have to try it sometime I think it's possible. Because your mind is really free. It's functioning but it's free. It's very interesting [10.1.354-367]

6. You kinda like come out of a daze

6.1) You've been doing (TC) without thinking at all - I could be partway through the set and not even realize that I've done it

"...sometimes you're doing a set and you kinda like come out of a daze and you don't know how far along in the set you are, you've been doing it without thinking at all" [10.1.153-155]

"...on a real good day, like I mentioned before I could be partway through the set and not even realize that I've done it." [10.1.273-274]

7. Sometimes you're thinking maybe what you have to do in the afternoon, or maybe something that's bothering you, comes into focus [mind]

7.1) If (I) get too far out of focus I get lost – I want to miss a set of moves

"Sometimes, yeah, maybe you're thinking about, maybe what you have to do in the afternoon, or maybe something that's bothering you, comes into focus..." [10.1.319-320]

INT- Oh ok. Um, you said sometimes what happens is a problem will come up into focus for you.
RA- Yeah, an outside problem. Something, may be a small thing like you think about when you got in the car and you were coming to class, you noticed you need gasoline, well the easy way to get that is on the way home because we can swing over a block and go by the gas station so, all of sudden you're doing this tc and this thing pops into your head 'get gas!', you know [laughs]. You know, a simple thing like that, uh, other times it could be a little more complicated problem, or perhaps even a problem that isn't there but you think it's there, you know, we all have those I assume.
INT- Right. But when those thoughts come, does that actually distract you from doing the moves correctly?
RA- If they come too often yeah I get lost.
INT- oh ok,

RA- Uh, I want to miss a set of moves. Common one is 'Fair Lady' If you're not, if you get too far out of focus you want to skip that one and go into the 7 wave Hands
INT- Oh, ok so you're just saying you just miss a little section
RA- Yeah you want to. [10.1.331-347]

RA
Paraphrase List: Perceived Outcomes

"...it (TC) would probably help, you know, depending on what problem the person has. Like some people I know have circulation problems. And I say well it would help that. You know if they're having back problems, this is really good for their back." [10.1.185-189]

1. By the end of the class I feel a lot better (Physically)
   1.1) (The arthritis pain) eases right up, sometimes it goes entirely away by the time I'm through the class

RA It took me a long time to learn the set because I, I was in a lot of pain, with my knees all the time, and it's hard to concentrate when you're in pain, you know. There's no pain now at all, that's the good thing

INT- Right. Do you think that's from that's because you had the knees replaced?

RA- Yeah. So that's the other thing that I was talking to – or, I was thinking about when we- I first talked to you, that I don't know whether this tc has improved my health that much in that regard, or it's – I think probably it's more likely that the operations did. But the tc, helps. And the same thing with the RA, I was doin' all this tc and I've been doing it well, last year it was really bad, I was getting – my shoulders and my hips were really getting sore, and uh, at that point they put me on a different drug, a new drug, that had just came out. And that's – I think that made the big difference, rather than the tc, although, some days when I'm all stiff and – well not really bad but I really don't feel – you know I feel a little stiff or a little bit of pain in the shoulders come and do a set, or come to the class, and by the end of the class I feel a lot better.

INT- Hm, ok

RA- with the movements

INT- Hm, tell me more about, about that. What do you mean by 'I feel a lot better'?

RA- Well there's uh, if you can get away from pain, you're going to feel better. That's what I was referring to is the physical part of it

INT- So it actually, you feel less painful after?

RA- Yeah it uh, it eases right up, sometimes it goes entirely away by the time I'm through the class [10.1.108-129]

2. (TC) builds up leg strength in the muscles in your knees, around your knee joint – it's an extension of rehab

RA- I came back [after total knee replacement surgery] and it was, because more of a rehab almost – different type but similar. Because in the rehab they do deep knee bends and that's similar to Dan Yus

INT- Oh I see, so you're saying that some of the tc was almost like a rehab

RA- Yeah, it's an extension of rehab. And one thing that the tc does is it builds muscles in your knees, around your knee joint, and I find that's really good on these artificial knees. [10.1.89-94]

INT- you said you did notice that you felt a little bit better, even at the early stages of learning tc. Um, do you recall when you started to notice some you know, some things that uh, you were feeling better, do you recall what those what those things were?

RA- Yeah, that's uh, long ways back but, I think, even then, even with bad knees I was building up some, leg strength and some, uh, some muscle around the knees, because uh, it wasn't until we were into it for a couple of years that, that I heard he expression 'step with no weight' so that you know like, you're not committed, you can withdraw that step – that's what they mean. Apparently that's a martial art technique, that, you know, you're gonna make a move and then your opponent challenges you in a different way then you can remove that. I couldn't do that at all, when I stepped I was fully committed. It seemed like you're just lunging into all the moves. So when that started to change a little bit, I felt better. [10.2.78-90]

3. (TC) loosens everything up
    3.1) After the (tc) set, we do the final bow, I can quite often see a difference there, you know, depending on how bad it was to start, maybe I can gain maybe another inch, just by loosening everything up

> "After the set, we do the final bow, I can quite often see a difference (in how far I can bend down)...on a bad day I can get down to my ankles but I can't get to the floor – on a good day I still can't to the floor, but I do it, the knees aren't locked they're slightly bent, and I can get down fairly close, so, it's a relative thing there. And, after the set, we do the final bow, I can quite often see a difference there, you know, depending on how bad it was to start, maybe I can gain maybe another inch, just by loosening everything up, you see..."[10.1.554-559]

4. Another thing that came out of (TC) was balance (outdoors)
    4.1) Even after the first while I began to have more confidence in, you know in, the kind of a reaction you would have if you slipped

INT- You had mentioned that, even in the first year, after the first year, you had felt some improvement for you I think.

RA- Yeah I think another thing that came out of it was balance too. Not so much in the tc, but outside. And some kind of confidence started to build where –like because I hate walking on ice, I think all people do, they're always scared that they're gonna break a hip or something. And uh, at that time I was very worried about – well not worried – was aware of those things, and, even after the first while I began to have more confidence in, you know in, the kind of a reaction you would have if you slipped. I notice that now it's, like if I make a mistake in footing and I start to slip I recover, before I go down. Except for [laughs] about a month ago when I – I was trimmin' a bush and I, slipped and then my other foot tripped on a root, and I fell into the bush, [laughs] twisted my knee. But I, and that, I think, tc was there, cause when I went down and I thought 'Oh boy here we go Misericordia Hospital' you know – with the implants you're not supposed to you know, do that kind of stuff. But I got up and it was sore and I walked for a little bit and it was, pretty good and the next day I did tc, couldn't do the, the whole class, but I did part of it. I took about a month and then, right back to where it was. [10.2.91-107]

5. I think I'm more relaxed, all the time [mental/emotional]
    5.1) Generally I feel more relaxed around people than I did before

RA- ...generally I feel more relaxed around people than I, I did before. It would be terrible doing this thing [interview] if uh, if I was still working in that situation I'd have a terrible time. But I think it's, well it's easy for me now... [10.2.149-151]

> "...I think I mentioned that I was more relaxed with people." [10.1.401]

- *My wife says, 'you're more relaxed when you're around other people now than you ever were before*
- *I can talk to these people kind of openly and freely*
- *If I hadn't done tc, this interview would be a lot tougher than it is*

INT- Hm. You didn't find it hard to start something new, did you? Like when this came along?
RA- Uh, it was, yeah. Because when I was working like, I was uh, in the machine shop I was grinding crankshafts which is, you pretty well have to be left alone, cause it's a full concentration job. And so, that was the kind of person I was anyway, you know, kind of a loner and not a social type person. When you come to this (TC class) then you have to change. And that change from being a loner like that, where the only time I would talk to anybody would be at coffee breaks or lunchtime, to the kind of thing now, that I found that uh – and even my wife says, 'you're more relaxed when you're around other people now than you ever were before'. And it's just because of the association and, uh, I guess you could call it friendship
INT- Right. Have you made a lot of friends here?
RA- Well, not real close friends, but, associates that you can talk to
INT- Oh ok, right
RA- Like, at the club, or if they have a, a social event then we have to go to that my wife says so [laughs]. I can talk to these people kind of openly and freely. I think this'd be – if I hadn't done tc, this interview would be a lot tougher than it is. But it, I feel relaxed It's a I think it's a benefit I don't know [10.1.198-215]

- *I got sucked into being the president of that (seniors' club)*
- *I tried being an assistant*

INT- you said you were actually a board member now, is that right?
RA- Well they have a seniors club they call _____. And for some reason or other I got sucked into being the president of that. They couldn't get anybody else so I got stuck with it, so, being the president of the golden division, automatically puts you on the branch council. You have the full voting privileges of a member in branch council but you don't get elected on there in the normal way. I'm not just too sure what the hell the normal way works, but I know I got stuck on that one too. That's one of the reasons I miss some Saturdays, cause they usually have the meetings at 9:00 in the morning and they run right through till noon.
INT- Ok. So you've gone from being pretty much a loner, to, being quite involved actually in the ___ (name of TC group)
RA- Yeah, along those lines, I took that instructor training course uh, 2 or 3 years ago. And that was pretty good and I tried being an assistant. And that worked not too bad. But uh, I just don't have the stuff to make a, an instructor. But uh, being an assistant when they have a big class or something is, is quite alright.
INT- Oh ok. So you do help with the teaching sometimes now
RA- Yeah. Last year, was really busy. I did one class, helped with one class here in the afternoon Tuesdays and Thursdays. That lasted about 3 months. And then I was doin' an external class over at the ___ (name of local seniors' organization). And that was every Wednesday morning. And that was, I couldn't take that [laughs] But I did it for a whole year. This year, well since the holidays I haven't done anything but I'll, I'll probably get asked to do some in the New Year, some assisting. [10.1.216-238]

5.2) I don't get uptight and angry so much and it doesn't last
5.3) I don't get out of control like I used to

INT- Um, so you talked a little bit about how your body feels when you practise and you talked a bit about what's going through your mind, um, do you, have you noticed that over the years that you've done tc that, is there something that's changed about you, about how you think or, how you feel emotionally, your mood that sort of thing, when you compare to how you were before you started the tc and you look at yourself now?

RA- Yeah, I think I mentioned that I was more relaxed with people. But I think I'm more relaxed, all the time. Uh, I still get uptight and I still get angry sometimes but, it doesn't last, so. And I don't get out of control like I used to. Of course, from when I started to now, you see I've retired, and have a lot less problems that way [pause] but uh, just in general, uh, I'm more relaxed at most times you know. [10.1.396-405]

INT- Oh ok, alright. Is that um, you had said that that is a difference from how you were before. Can you just give me a bit of a sense of – can you give me some examples of that? Like how, I don't know, like how you might deal with a situation now compared to how you dealt with them before or, just some examples from your own life?

RA- Yeah, I think the uh, one that is probably good and maybe the most beneficial is uh, if I'm driving and uh, since I'm not in a hurry I don't drive very fast, usually go about 50 km instead of the 60 – or somewhere in between – and somebody gets anxious and, cuts me off or something. If I'm with my wife I jut look over at her and say [smiles] 'gee that guy must be in a hurry' you know 'I wonder is he going to work, he must have a real good job if he's going to work and he's you know in such a hurry to get there'. Whereas before I'd get mad, and, I probably wouldn't do anything, but I know my blood pressure would go up and I would start to swear, and that would really get my wife mad and she would say 'you don't have to use that kind of language' and that would get me worse [laughs]

INT- Oh ok [flip tape] Um, so you find that just your, you feel that your mood, you're not as easily angered as before is that what you're saying

RA- Yeah. And if it does like do slip and get angry about it, it doesn't last. Start to calm down and get a chance to think about what happened and you know 'how serious is this?' guy cuts you off well, think, you have to step on the brakes for, a couple of seconds and let him in, you know, because he's crowding so much that you're scared that you're gonna hit him, but, well, that's ok.

INT- Right. Ok alright. You had said something about control or out of control as well. Is that an example of that? Or were you thinking of something else?

RA- Uh yeah sometimes I [long pause] lose control and uh, maybe even get violent but not with people, but, maybe break something, cause it deserved it or something, some inanimate objects [laughs] that did me wrong – well how could it, you know, really? You know, what I did didn't, treat the object in a way that it would respond in the way I wanted, but then I have to blame the object. And then I would be uh, hit it with a hammer or something. But that's a long time since I've been that bad. [10.1.406-434]

"I don't get uptight so much" [10.2.155]

6. I have a casual feeling about the whole relation ship between man and religion [spiritual]
    6.1) It's (a) one day at a time kind of thing - don't dwell on what's gonna happen after you leave this life. That's kinda gone now - I'm like 'who cares'

INT- How about um, when we talk about spirituality in general, just the whole idea about sort of finding meaning in life and so on, you know, not strictly just religion. Have you noticed anything there/ Has tc brought you anything in that form?

RA- Just uh, a casual feeling about the whole relation ship between man and religion, because there's the stress is off everything, so, um, I like to believe there's something after life, but

I don't set up a set rule for myself that if I don't do this then I have to do that, if I don't then I'm going to lose the benefit of this afterlife. That's kinda gone now. It's uh, maybe it's just living, maybe it's just getting older...[10.1.478-185]

RA- ...it's uh, one day at a time kind of thing. If you're gonna, spend your remaining years worrying about what's gonna happen after you leave this life, then you're wasting a lot of time, so, if you can be relaxed enough to accept the uh, possibility, and uh, say 'that'll be a good thing' but don't dwell on it so that you're wasting time and energy and worrying and probably bringin' on more, doin' your body more harm than good because of the worry. But again it might be just old age, retirement, I'm like 'who cares' [10.1.496-502]

7. If you do enough of this (TC) stuff you, you start noticing other people (move) too

RA- Well, if you do enough of this stuff you, you start noticing other people too, you see somebody walking towards you and they got a limp or a, one shoulder's higher than the other or something and, and you know, you can, you just automatically say 'gee that's' you know sometimes you can figure out what's wrong but I can, I never, judge anything but....when Reed was here, I guess he's the guy that started it in Edmonton, and, one time we came up here [to upstairs practise area], was just gonna sit down before they started and he said 'boy you got a bad limp there' I said 'oh that's what I came to tc for' you know. But he could pick it out right away. But he's been at it a long time, spent a lot of time with Mister ___ (TC teacher).

INT- Ok. So do you find now that you've been doing it for a while that you notice sometimes-

RA- yeah

INT- more

RA- You just notice notice the way people walk for some reason or another yeah. [10.2.112-125]

Stan
Paraphrase List: TC Initiation

1. A TC instructor put on some demonstrations for us
    1.1) We were very impressed by her flexibility, what great shape (she was in)

INT- ...just tell me a little bit about how did you get started in Tai Chi

ST- Right, ok. Well my son lives in HK, and uh, he met a gal from Malaysia, and they're now married, and this was in 1994, 95, and uh, their parents came over to visit, in the summer of 1996. And her mother is an instructor of tc in Malaysia. And at that time she was about 56 and we were uh, very impressed with how, flexible she was and what great shape and, and so she put on some tc demonstrations for us, for my wife and I and so on. And so we became interested and uh looked into the Tai Chi Society that fall and started.

INT- Oh ok

ST- doing tc [9.2.3-13]

2. I think there was some advertisement in the paper that we saw

INT-How did you hear about this, this place?

ST- Oh, this place? Um [pause] I think we looked just looked in the phone book, for Taoist TC, and I think we phoned them – or maybe there was an ad in the paper, I think that's what it was, simultaneously I think there was some, some advertisement in the paper that we saw. [11.1.14-18]

3. It's not a 'Hard' Exercise
    3.1) It wasn't difficult on my knees, it was actually helpful

INT- Oh ok. So um, if you can think back to when you did first see tc, can you tell me what it was about it that, that uh-

ST- Well I think the uh, the idea that it wasn't um, difficult – it, it's difficult to understand, but it's not diffi-physically difficult to do. It - well it is in a way, but it it, it's not a hard exercise, in other words, I had some knee problems and it wasn't difficult on my knees, it was actually helpful. You know, as compared to um some other exercises where you're pounding more on your knees, and uh, I wasn't that interested in taking very difficult physical exercise, like weight lifting. It just doesn't appeal to me much. [9.2.39-46]

Motivation for changing location

4. (Other location) got very crowded, so we decided to come here
5. This (location) is actually closer, easier to get to (than others)

INT- ...what got you to transfer to the West end-

ST- ...we live in _____- and this (West end centre) is really just as close, as the other centre. And we've gone actually back and forth, we we have been to the other, the new centre they have, we were there for, I think a, a winter or 2, and then uh but it that got very crowded so we decided to come here, 2 or 3 years ago, and this is much better. It's actually-

INT- the classes aren't so big is it

ST- Yeah, and this is actually closer.

INT- Oh ok

ST- Turns out, it's easier to get to [11.2.24-38]

Stan
Paraphrase List: TC Continuation

1. Coming at noon hour has given me a real positive boost
    1.1)I don't particularly like to exercise in the evenings before I go to bed

> "I think I would like to continue it, actually coming at noon hour has given me a real positive boost, to the whole thing, cause I was finding coming in the evenings a bit of a drag yeah, just too tired". [11.1.493-495]

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ST- Now, since I stopped working, we find it easier to come during the daytime because, I think as you get, older, and not necessarily as you get older, but, uh, I don't particularly like to exercise in the evenings before I go to bed. I'd rather exercise in the daytime.

INT- can you tell me more about that?

ST- Yeah, I think I have trouble sleeping – like I used to play badminton tennis in the evenings and I found that if you really have a rigorous workout, it's difficult to settle back and get to sleep, I mean you know, it takes you, couple hours to kind of unwind from, and um, I just felt that also, in the evenings you're more tired and you're likely not as receptive to, tc as you would be during the day, you know your mind is not as sharp and you just feel, um, you're just not as, I don't think your body and mind are in as good a sh- like mine aren't as receptive as they could be. And also, -

INT- Like in terms of your concentration?

ST- Yeah, concentration and and ability to uh – concentration and ability of the body to you know, to absorb the whole hour and a half. Yeah and so, also I think in the evenings um, you generally are coming after dinner, which is not necessarily – I mean, you know, you're kinda rushing you know, you'll rush through dinner and then you rush to get to tc. Now if you're working there's nothing much you can do about it, but after, if, now that I'm retired you got more flexibility, uh, we didn't see much point in coming in the evening, just rushed things along.

INT- yeah, well, this sounds like this time slot works well for you

ST- yeah, right [11.1.129-150]

2. TC has an appeal in terms of being always challenging and interesting to learn
3. We realized that, we could likely cope with it

ST- ...we just kinda got into it, and I think the fact that it is, fairly difficult to master, you know, it's kinda like dance steps or something, it has an appeal in terms of like it's a challenge, I mean it's not dead easy, you know, it's not as if you're doing repetitions that are mindless

INT- Mm, alright, so it stays kind of interesting for you-

ST- Yeah, yeah because it is a challenge to learn it. And I think to start with, we did wonder whether we should be in it because it was such a challenge to, to kind of master that routine. But I mean, they uh, as you know they have a program of taking it pretty slow so, after a while we realized that, we could likely cope with it. [11.2.48-56]

> "...to be quite honest I couldn't do the full set myself, even now. I could from time to time in the past but, uh, I find that it's still challenging, I, you know I find it uh, it's not boring, you know I think it continually is challenging...to me it's always challenging and interesting..."[11.1.75-77, 80]

4. If I ever kinda thought that I'd give it up, what has usually prompted me to keep coming is changing instructors and just finding somebody else's approach

ST- ...we have, moved around with different instructors, which I find very useful. I don't think I've had the same, continuing class instructor for more than 2 years at a time. And I think that's good

INT- was that something by choice?

ST- Well kind of. If I ever kinda thought that I'd give it up, what has usually prompted me to keep coming is changing instructors and just finding that, you know, somebody else's approach and so on. You know, and I think, since 1996, we've likely had at least 5 different instructors. And I think that uh, that helps. [11.1.80-88]

5. I enjoy it and I feel a lot better (flexibility, balance, relaxing, circulation)
    5.1) I think it takes awhile, you know it's not instantaneous
    5.2) The benefits are on the subtle side but, they're clearly there

INT- What is it about it that helps you to keep up?

ST- ...actually I just feel better and I kinda like coming, you know it's uh, I don't find it not one of these things where you say 'oh god I gotta go to tc today' I don't feel that way I kinda I like coming. It's it's – you know so I enjoy it and I feel a lot better, and I – but it's like a lot of other things, you're not gonna have, it's not like a high-powered pill or something where you, you know you automatically, feel better, I think it takes awhile, you know it's not instantaneous, but I don't think any exercise is, you're not gonna have big muscles after one workout [laughs]

INT- that's true

ST- so the benefits are on the subtle side but, they're clearly there [11.1.338-349]

ST- ...once I got back for a month or 6 weeks I found my balance was better, you know, and I find that flexibility is better. It's it's almost, it doesn't happen overnight, like one lesson isn't gonna do it, if if you've done it for like a month or 6 weeks I think you notice a difference.

INT- Mm ok.

ST- And I think that's what keeps me coming. [11.1.276-281]

INT- So for you um, just knowing that you do this for your, to keep yourself healthy-

ST- right

INT- is enough for you to keep going

ST- Yes, yeah, and that's primarily why I come you know...

INT- No that's good though if you can decide to do this for your health-

ST- Yes

INT- And that's enough for you to stick with it

ST- yes, yeah [9.1.292-300]

13.4) I found it just relaxing, to do it

INT- Ok. What is it, you know when you said that, that at the beginning, you weren't even sure whether or not you should be there

ST- Yeah

INT- What is it that kept you there?

ST- Well, I think um, I think we enjoyed, actually we enjoyed coming, we felt better. And I find, I was working then and I had quite a stressful job, so I found that I uh, I could kinda unwind...And so, um, I found it just relaxing, to do it...[11.1.57-68]

5.3) (TC) also exercises different muscles and gives me more I think, it likely helps my circulation a lot more (than my other activities)

ST- this [tc] also exercises different muscles and gives me more I think, it likely helps my circulation a lot more. Because I'm actually doing exercises in tc that I wouldn't do otherwise, you know, the squats and, all that sort of stuff, you don't normally do that
INT- in the other exercises that you do
ST- yeah, right, yeah [11.1.487-491]

5.4) The more we got into TC the more we liked it

"...the more we got into it the more we liked it" [11.1.68-69]

6. You want to be able to complete the training

13.5) I don't usually like to start something and then give it up, without giving it a fair shot

"...I think then you want to, want to be able to complete the, the training. I don't usually like to start something and then give it up, without giving it a fair shot." [11.1.69-71]

7. Some of the stories I've heard over the years are very good testimonials as to why,one should do TC

"...I would say I have to be impressed by the people that I've met here, you know, in talking to them about why they're here. Uh, and some of the stories I've heard over the years, I think are very good testimonials as to why, one should do tc. I mean, I've seen people that are, extremely committed to it like they come every day. So I'm kinda talking to them about what, you know 'Is this your life?!" [laughs] and for some of them, it makes them feel so much better that it is their life, yeah it's really a big part of their life, because of back problems or that sort of thing, that they really find relieved..." [11.1.302-309]

8. I like doing TC in a group atmosphere

ST- ...I like doing it in a group atmosphere. I can't seem to do it, I don't seem to uh get that level of intensity at home – I mean, I do some at home, but it's basically the foundation exercises but I've – well for space and other things I, I've really never tried to do a set very much at home, I do some of the moves but it, I think one thing about tc and maybe about group exercises, we can go for an hour on group exercises, doing it at home I rarely go as long as 15 or 20 minutes I don't know, you just don't get the concentration, you know things distract you easily. And, maybe I'm not disciplined enough but I [laughs] I find it difficult to think of doing 1/2 hour of tc at home
INT- well tell me then about about when you come to your class here and you're involved with the group, what is it about the group that you find -
ST- I think the fact that um, you can watch what the moves are, easily, so you don't have to concentrate as much on what's coming up cause you can get a clue, just watching the instructor, he usually goes through the sets with us. And I think that, uh, having the instructor, as you know tc, is quite a sophisticated exercise, and it's just little moves that can throw you off, and I like to follow the instructor, you know, basically follow all his

hands and all the whole motion. And I think it keeps one, disciplined to exactly how the moves should look, you don't take, you're not as inclined to take shortcuts, you know, or leave off part of the move [11.1.158-176]

9. I actually, look forward to doing the (TC) sets, because there's a number of moves in there I just like doing

> "I found that particularly in the last year or two, that it's an exercise you kinda get into, and, I kind of enjoy doing the moves. You know, I really enjoy the various moves and I kinda look forward to doing them, my body feels good. Um, and it's hard to describe but I actually, look forward to doing the sets, because there's a number of moves in there I just like doing." [11.1.154-158]

10. I actually find the atmosphere (of the TC class) quite relaxing, nice
    13.6) Nice people here
    13.7) The instructors have all been, good and very helpful

ST- I think we have I think I find I actually find the atmosphere quite relaxing you know nice people here, you know not uh, nobody's obnoxious or you know [laughs] Yeah I think the whole atmosphere is it's it's nice. And the instructors have all been, good and very helpful and if you wanna sit down or take off they're not, upset about it. [11.1.327-330]

11. I think TC is far better than riding a stationary bike, in terms of maintaining interest

> "...you know particularly riding bikes and stuff, it's not like riding a bike in the countryside, you know, stationary bikes and stuff. And I find that it would be difficult for me to, maintain my interest in that sort of stuff, and I think tc is clearly a level above that. You know what I mean, it's far better than riding a stationary bike, in terms of maintaining interest..." [11.1.408-412]

Stan
Paraphrase List: Lived Experience

1. My body feels good - just moving the muscles in my arms and legs feels good

INT- Ok, um, let's talk a little bit about what happens for you when you're actually in the process of practising a tai chi set....
ST- yeah, right, yeah. I think that um, it's it's I found that particularly in the last year or two, that it's an exercise you kinda get into, and, I kind of enjoy doing the moves. You know, I really enjoy the various moves and I kinda look forward to doing them, my body feels good. Um, and it's hard to describe but I actually, look forward to doing the sets, because there's a number of moves in there I just like doing. [9.1.151-158]

INT- Ok, Now you said that when you practise tc that you, your body enjoys how some of the moves go.
ST- Yes
INT- can you tell me a bit more about that. Can you give me an example
ST- Well, I think um [pause] well, do you want me to demonstrate?
INT- If you want you can yep
ST- Cause I don't know all the moves. Yeah, but [stands up and demonstrates [repulse the monkey] there's one that goes like this you know, and I like that one, and the one that goes, it's the variation of that one and then, just moving the arms and legs I just feel that it feels good, you know the muscles in the back and the arms, and the legs feel good. [9.1.184-194]

2. I'm just kind of absorbed in the moves and what's coming next, making sure you're executing (the moves) properly

INT- I'd like you to describe to me a bit more about what do you think about what goes through your mind when you do a tc set
ST- um, well a lot of it has to do with concentrating on the moves. You know, I don't think, I'm not thinking anything spiritual or anything like that, I mean it's just basically I find that I'm just kind of absorbed in the moves and what's coming next and, and it it, I just, in that sense find it relaxing. It's it's something that's uh, you know, uh, when you're concentrating on the move, it's not bothersome or worrisome. It's just absorbing.
INT- Right, ok, so you're thinking of, are you thinking about what's coming next or,
ST- yes, yeah, and making sure you're executing properly.
INT- Ok alright. That sort of, that sounds like that sort of feeds into how much you're watching your instructor as well -
ST- yes,
INT- isn't it?
ST- yeah, and the people around you [9.1.204-217]

2.1) Concentrating on TC sorta blocks out a lot of other noises going on, in your mind

> "...if you're into it it absorbs your thinking, I mean, some exercise patterns you know, you can do them and be reading a paper or watching TV or something. They're not very um, they don't involve your mind. But this was really a combination of involving that you had to sorta dedicate your thinking to it, while you're doing it. Which is a little more unusual than, a lot of the other exercises you did." [11.1.63-68]

> "...I think that when you're working and you've got some problems at the office, this doesn't always happen, but, uh you're kinda thinking about them after work, you know, you you sort of take them home with you, you're still mulling them around. And I think that if you go to something like tc, it's a great distraction, I mean, your concentrating on the tc and it sort of blocks out a lot of other noises going on, in your mind. [9.1.121-128]

2.2) I don't seem to uh get that level of intensity at home (compared to a group atmosphere)
2.3) We can go for an hour on group exercises - doing it at home I rarely go as long as 15 or 20 minutes
2.4) You just don't get the concentration (at home) - things distract you easily
2.5) (In class) you don't have to concentrate as much on what's coming up cause you can get a clue, just watching the instructor

ST- ...I like doing it in a group atmosphere. I can't seem to do it, I don't seem to uh get that level of intensity at home – I mean, I do some at home, but it's basically the foundation exercises but I've – well for space and other things I, I've really never tried to do a set very much at home, I do some of the moves but it, I think one thing about tc and maybe about group exercises, we can go for an hour on group exercises, doing it at home I rarely go as long as 15 or 20 minutes I don't know, you just don't get the concentration, you know things distract you easily. And, maybe I'm not disciplined enough but I [laughs] I find it difficult to think of doing 1/2 hour of tc at home

INT- well tell me then about about when you come to your class here and you're involved with the group, what is it about the group that you find -

ST- I think the fact that um, you can watch what the moves are, easily, so you don't have to concentrate as much on what's coming up cause you can get a clue, just watching the instructor, he usually goes through the sets with us. And I think that, uh, having the instructor, as you know tc, is quite a sophisticated exercise, and it's just little moves that can throw you off, and I like to follow the instructor, you know, basically follow all his hands and all the whole motion. And I think it keeps one, disciplined to exactly how the moves should look, you don't take, you're not as inclined to take shortcuts, you know, or leave off part of the move [11.1.158-176]

3. TC is not as absorbing or as fun as a game

ST- I think if I for some reason am traveling or whatever and I don't exercise for 3 or 4 days, I can feel it. I just don't feel as good. And I just feel sluggish and uh, it's almost like you get into a state where you don't really feel like doing any exercise, so you kind of have to boot yourself [laughs] get started again. And I think, you know there's a lot of people my age that I play tennis with and so on, and they exercise at the club quite a bit, and most of them feel the same way. You know, there's a number of people I know that um, work out quite often in the, uh equipment room at the club, you know before or after tennis, or, when they're not playing tennis as well And generally, you find that they do it because they feel better, it's not as if they're again, it's not great fun [laughs] you know particularly riding bikes and stuff, it's not like riding a bike in the countryside, you know, stationary bikes and stuff. And I find that it would be difficult for me to, maintain my interest in that sort of stuff, and I think tc is clearly a level above that. You know what I mean, it's far better than riding a stationary bike, in terms of maintaining interest and, I think as some people at the university were pointing out on this course I was taking [Live it Up] you need to do exercises that you enjoy, or at least that you don't detest, uh, or you won't do them. And, there's evidence of that they were saying and I agree with it. If you go to most garage sales there're a lot of these stationary bikes for sale, and equipment, [laughs] that's hardly been used [11.1.398-416]

ST- It's It's not the uh – tc of course is not like playing tennis, I mean it's not that absorbing, it's not that much fun [laughs] or golf [laughs] you know what I mean, it's more in the lines of an aerobic or it's in that kind of category it's not in the fun cat-I mean, it may be a – it is of some pleasure, but it's not like a game.
INT- Ok so the tennis and the golf, those are really, your real loves
ST- Yeah [laughs] I mean, you don't necessarily have to do those to feel better, I mean you're doing those cause you like, like the game, right? And it would be like, maybe playing bridge or something, you know [laughs] Tennis and golf are more in the lines of having fun, and being with the people, so. Uh, so it's, I wouldn't put tc in that category [11.1.281-291]

Stan
Paraphrase List: Perceived Outcomes

1. **The benefits are on the subtle side but, they're clearly there**
   1.1) **It's not like a high-powered pill or something where you automatically feel better - I think it takes awhile, you know it's not instantaneous**

ST- I feel a lot better, and I – but it's like a lot of other things, you're not gonna have, it's not like a high-powered pill or something where you, you know you automatically, feel better, I think it takes awhile, you know it's not instantaneous, but I don't think any exercise is, you're not gonna have big muscles after one workout [laughs]
INT- that's true
ST- so the benefits are on the subtle side but, they're clearly there [11.1.343-349]

> "...it doesn't happen overnight, like one lesson isn't gonna do it, if if you've done it for like a month or 6 weeks I think you notice a difference." [11.1. 277-279]

2. **The arthritis isn't as severe - (TC) keeps it under control [physical]**
   2.1) **I have more flexibility**
   2.2) **I don't have as much soreness**

ST- I had some knee problems and it wasn't difficult on my knees, it was actually helpful. [9.2.43-44]

ST- ...I should mention that I've had arthritic knees. And I find tc is very helpful
INT- How so?
ST- Well, it just um, if I don't do a s- arthritis in the knees or any joint, as you would know, is one of those things where, if you don't do any exercise it gets worse, if you over exercise it gets worse. So you have to have some kind of, happy medium in there, and if you're if um if you're doing exercises for me on my knees, if I isn't too difficult, or too hard on them, um, it improves, you know, the arthritis, the arthritis isn't as severe. So I find tc to be quite a, quite a very good exercise in that regard....
INT- So what kind of symptoms, what kind of arthritis symptoms do you find are helped?
ST- Uh, Well I just think I have more flexibility, and and I don't have as much soreness, and I would say I I'm not under intense pain with my arthritis, its' more stiffness and soreness, if you know the difference....with tc it's generally, uh such that I don't think it ever causes me a problem it's usually something else. Yeah, and so I find that it's a good, it's a good remedy, it's not gonna I don't think it's gonna cure it, but it keeps it under control. [9.1.231-238; 241-244; 254-256]

> "I notice after several weeks of continuous TC that I can –
>
> - Walk for longer periods without sore knees
> - Less soreness of knees at bedtime and during the nite (sic)" [11.2.18-19, 22-23]

3. **I think (TC) helps my circulation [physical]**
   3.1) **Your heart rate goes up**
   3.2) **I think that it helps keep my blood pressure under control**
   3.3) **You're not as inclined to have cold hands and feet**
   3.4) **You're not as inclined to feel sluggish or have slight headaches**

ST- ...I think, (TC) likely helps my circulation a lot more (than other exercises I do) [11.1.487-491]

INT- ...how would you describe Tai Chi to someone who had never seen it before?
ST- Uh, I think you'd describe it as a uh, exercise similar to, low level ballet or, um, an exercise that involves thinking and um, using all your muscles, and assisting in your circulation, and um, low-intensity. Cause I think that, a lot of people that watch it say 'well, you're not getting much of a work out' but, uh I find that if you do it continuously for 3/4 of an hour, you do get a workout from it.
INT- how do you feel when you practise tc for about 3/4 of an hour – how do you know you're getting a workout?
ST- Well I think your heart rate goes up, I've actually measured my heart rate after an hour [9.1.101-110]

INT- Ok. You said that you measure your heart rate. What does it go up to?
ST- It doesn't go up as high as it should. Mine is generally around uh 60, and it can get up to maybe 100 or 110, which is not, you know, it's not like running 3 miles and get it up to 150 or 140 but it does go up. [9.1.117-120]

ST- ...I have um high blood pressure, which I'm taking Rx for, so it's under control. Uh, but I would say that I think that it helps keep my blood pressure under control, but I can't, you know there's no way of documenting it I mean I've, I'm now, and it likely has to do with not working any longer and also watching my food and so on but, I'm taking less Rx drugs now than I have for 25 years
INT- Is that right?
ST- Yep, I'm on my lowest dosage of – and so that goes back a long time. Yeah. So I've actually got it better under control now than I've had for 25 years. [9.1.259-263]

INT- ...you had mentioned that you thought tc assisted the circulation
ST- yes
INT- can you tell me more about that?
ST- Yeah, I think that um [pause]
INT- Is that from personal experience?
ST- Yeah, I just kind of feel that, I think my blood pressure is under better control and I just generally feel better, and not as inclined to, it – you know, do you recognize when your circulation is good or bad? I mean, I can tell, in a way, whether I'm, have good circulation, or it's not as good, because for one thing, um, you're more inclined to have say, cold feet in the wintertime
INT- Mhm, yeah I can relate to that [both laugh]
ST- Yeah and or, you know, cold hands. Now if your circulation is at a better level, you're not as inclined to have those symptoms are you? And you're not as inclined to feel sluggish, right? And you may not be as inclined to have minor or slight headaches. [9.1.379-393]

4. My muscles are firmer - I think they're toned up more [physical]

ST- In fact I've noticed that um, after doing tc for quite a long time that it's not that I'm building up a bunch of muscles that are noticeable, but they are firmer, all my back muscles are firmer than they used to be, and my arm muscles. They're not necessarily bigger, they're firmer.
INT- Ok, so it's like a toning -
ST- Yeah, right

INT- of the muscles
ST- yeah. And the same with leg muscles, I think they're toned up more [9.1.194-201]

4.1)(TC) exercises different muscles (than other exercises I do)

ST- this [tc] also exercises different muscles....I'm actually doing exercises in tc that I wouldn't do otherwise, you know, the squats and, all that sort of stuff, you don't normally do that
INT- in the other exercises that you do
ST- yeah, right, yeah [11.1.487-491]

5. I Think TC Helps My General Mobility [physical]
   5.1) I think (TC) helps my flexibility
   5.2) I think (TC) helps my balance
      - *If you've done it for like a month or 6 weeks I think you notice a difference*

INT- How about um, are there any sort of um, sort of long term effects I guess in terms of are there any things that you feel have um, have really changed for you since when you compare to before you did tc to now?
ST- Um, yeah, it's uh difficult to tell, I think it helps my flexibility uh and I think it helps my balance. Like I noticed when I for like this summer, uh we didn't we, I kinda quit in in, I quit early this spring, because in May I buggered up my knee, so I couldn't come back to tc. So I basically was off May June July august, and I didn't get back until September. And once I got back for a month or 6 weeks I found my balance was better, you know, and I find that flexibility is better. It's it's almost, it doesn't happen overnight, like one lesson isn't gonna do it, if if you've done it for like a month or 6 weeks I think you notice a difference.
INT- Mm ok.
ST- And I think that's what keeps me coming. [9.1.269-281]

- *Can get around tennis court faster*
- *(In TC) it is much easier to do the one legged kicks (separate foot left and right) after several weeks of training*

"On the question of balance – can get around tennis court faster. (G)enerally better mobility, and when re-starting TC it is much easier to do the one legged kicks (separate foot left and right) after several weeks of training." [11.Addendum1.28-30]

5.3) Improved (physical) function (climbing stairs, getting in/out of chairs, cars, walking longer, less soreness, move faster)
- *I can go up and down stairs better*
- *I can get in and out of chairs*
- *I can get in and out of cars better*
- *I can walk for longer periods without sore knees*
- *I have less soreness of knees at bedtime and during the nite*
- *(I can) generally move faster*

"... it is difficult to be definitive or very precise in providing details with regard to feeling better; however maybe I can give you examples of improved functions. I notice after several weeks of continuous TC that I can –

- Go up and down stairs better
- Get in and out of chairs and cars better
- Walk for longer periods without sore knees
- Less soreness of knees at bedtime and during the nite (sic)
- Generally move faster (wife has not noticed much difference)" [11.2.17-24]

6. I've often felt refreshed (after TC) [mental/emotional]

   6.1) TC is a Great Distraction - blocks out other noises going on in your mind

INT- Now, you really stressed at the beginning that, for you, when you were working, that it was helpful for your stress level. Can you tell me more about that?

ST- Yes, I think that when you're working and you've got some problems at the office, this doesn't always happen, but, uh you're kinda thinking about them after work, you know, you you sort of take them home with you, you're still mulling them around. And I think that if you go to something like tc, it's a great distraction, I mean, your concentrating on the tc and it sort of blocks out a lot of other noises going on, in your mind. And I think that, I've often felt refreshed. [9.1.121-129]

7. I find (TC) relaxing [mental/emotional]

"...I found it just relaxing..." [11.1.68]

"I'm just kind of absorbed in the moves and what's coming next and, and it it, I just, in that sense find it relaxing"

"I had quite a stressful job, so I found that I uh, I could kinda unwind...And so, um, I found it (TC) just relaxing, to do it...[11.1.62-63]

Appendix H

Comprehensive Paraphrase Lists

Comprehensive Paraphrase List
I. Motivation for Initiation of Tai Chi Practice

Catherine

1. There was a Buddhist monk doing tc
2. it was quite beautiful
3. The head monk said (tc is) an excellent thing to combine with meditation
4. I've been rather enchanted with the East - (that maybe drew me to TC)
5. I saw a course advertised
6. (The TC class is) not very far from where we live
7. (My previous TC instructor) recommended that I go to study under (my present instructor)
8. I discovered that I had osteoporosis – it increased my fervour for TC
9. I saw myself with a widow's hump, you know, and a broken bone, and a wheelchair, and nursing home, and I thought, 'Not me!'
10. It increased my fervour for physical (exercise) overall, but it couldn't be excessive because might break a bone, crush a vertebrae or
11. I had retired by the time I actually started to practice intensely
12. I decided that tc might help me see my way through (the challenges of menopause, teaching, and raising a family)
13. I started out doing tc accepting that something good might come from it

Sally

14. I saw (TC), in action - We would stand and watch the TC group doing demonstrations at the fringe
15. (I liked) the music
16. I liked watching these people moving in unison
17. I like(d) the slowness of tc
18. I was picking up the energy that flowed within that group and out to some of us who were standing there watching

[Motivation to Return to TC]

19. The after work, once a week program offered at (my workplace) was ideal
20. The interest in (TC) never died - I really wanted to get back to doing some of that

Ben

21. I was thinking (we) should get into some kind of exercise
22. We didn't want to run
23. I had always wanted to take martial arts
24. Slow martial art would be ideal- older people can't take kung fu because it's kinda strenuous
25. The doctor said (to my wife) 'take this tc'
26. The ad caught my eye
27. The fee was pretty good

Shirley

28. (My) Doctor said 'Why don't you join Tai Chi for your stress/depression'
29. (My husband said) 'We're gonna join Tai Chi'
30. (My husband said) 'You're gonna do it'

Cathy

31. I always have been very active- I had to give that up so, only thing I was still doing was walking, and I didn't find that quite enough

32. Our son said to me, 'Mum you should do tc'
33. I had heard about it
34. I had seen it advertised
35. It was only 5 minutes from my home

Anne

36. They showed people doing tc, in Beijing. And I thought 'gee that looks neat!'
37. I had seen other programs on TV
38. (I had) heard some women talking at the university about it.
39. When I finally got enough time then I started
40. I just thought it was absolutely beautiful
41. I was very physically active - I didn't want to lose what I had gained from that activity

RA

42. (My wife said) 'well you should maybe try (tc) or look into it...'
43. (I) watched them do a set and decided 'well, yeah it would be worth a try'
44. If it didn't work out well, you haven't lost anything
45. I thought 'well, yeah, I could probably do that'
46. It's not like uh, uh, some of the other martial arts that are vicious and fast and, lot of body contact.
47. I liked the way the moves were controlled
48. It was close to home
49. (I liked) the idea of being able to join in a group and and move with them, and, feel that relaxed while you were doing it

Stan

50. A TC instructor put on some demonstrations for us
51. We were very impressed by her flexibility, what great shape (she was in)
52. It's not a 'Hard' Exercise
53. It wasn't difficult on my knees, it was actually helpful

Motivation for changing location

54. (Other location) got very crowded, so we decided to come here
55. This (location) is actually closer, easier to get to (than others)

Comprehensive Paraphrase List
II. Motivation for Continuation of Tai Chi Practice

Catherine

1. Here it's the same people, more or less, you have a sense of continuity
2. My energy isn't depleted by doing other things (now I'm retired)
3. I sort of let the tc be my focus for the week
4. I'm learning from a very good teacher
5. Studying under her has made me want to be able to go through the whole routine entirely on my own
6. I suspect (TC is) very good for me, from what I've observed
7. I concluded that if TC helped to keep (my TC master) physically and mentally alert, until age 89, it must have something for everyone
8. We enjoy it
9. I enjoy doing it with a the group
10. It's an aesthetic experience - If there's a beautiful place, I seem to have the need to do TC there
11. I'm a part of that – the geography of that group
12. I don't do the (TC) Sword well with any other group
13. I go in honour of (my teachers)
14. I practice tc cause I like the results

Sally

15. I know that a certain amount of physical exercise per week is important for one's overall health, um, so, I'll come to tc
16. It was the only physical exercise I was getting (early on)
17. (TC is) just part of the whole week of (a variety of exercises) I set out for myself (presently)
18. (TC is) just so important to my week, that I will accommodate it
19. I know what takes me there is that I do enjoy it
20. (TC leader) makes it enjoyable
21. (TC leader) does not place an overly high demand on the group of students
22. The tone of this group is very good
23. (the TC master) is a very personable individual, as a leader
24. The other helpers are very personable individuals
25. There's a camaraderie
26. There's a helpfulness
27. No one there doing any sort of um, judging or putting you down
28. We can use that word 'community' if you like
29. We have fun
30. There's a conviviality (in the tc group)
31. The benefit is always there
32. I do come out with that improved sense of well-being
33. I feel good when I've finished

Ben

34. I was very enthusiastic on practising (TC) cause I wanted to get knowledge of the steps
35. I found, for myself that if I come home and I practised the (TC) moves that we learned that day, it was more beneficial than if I didn't practise them
36. I didn't want to miss these (TC) classes, because to miss these classes I'd be behind
37. I like going (to do TC)
38. I like doin' the tc moves

39. I find it's relaxing
40. I feel good after I leave
41. It was very interesting
42. There was a totally different thing to do tc with, ok, so that kept me interested and I kept going
43. I liked it very much - we liked the class right off the bat
44. We liked the music that went along with (TC) it totally relaxes you - the music and the moves went hand in hand
45. The people are very nice
46. When we first started the people were very willing to help you out
47. The social functions are nice
48. We have a lot of fun doin' (TC)/ It's a fun class
49. It would have to be the exercise
50. I was threatening to quit but (my wife) told me not to and, we're still there
51. I have to keep going back to refresh my memory

Shirley

52. (My husband) would push me (to do TC) - He had to push me (Initially)
53. I wouldn't have gone (to tc) by myself
54. I enjoy doing (TC)
55. I enjoy it very much for an exercise which I never thought was an exercise
56. I enjoy the people – we've made a lot of friends
57. It's lots of fun

Cathy

58. I Got Really Hooked Right From the Beginning - really liked it
59. After a month I started feeling better, and once I started feeling better, you know, I wasn't going to let it go
60. I found the more I did (TC) the better I felt
61. I think it was the instructor that gave me the encouragement
62. Even (if) you learn it (tc) and you say 'yes I know it' you have to go and refine it

Anne

63. The physical (and mental) aspects of doing TC I find beneficial to me (keeps me limber, mentally alert, allows me to move and at the same time detach from the pain) [PO]
64. TC allows me to move and at the same time detach from the pain that I feel so I'm not going to give it up
65. Keeps me limber
66. Keeps me mentally alert (see above quote)
67. It's the companionship, and the friendships, that evolve from coming to do tc
68. it does become a support group and almost an extended family
69. it's a community feeling
70. it's friendly, it's accepting
71. this has become an escape for me
72. All my doctors have always said, 'stay with the tc
73. I thought ' well this (TC) is neat and I like doing it and I enjoy doing it'
74. TC has become a part of me
75. TC never becomes repetitive
76. You never learn tc completely
77. As your body responds to what you're doing, it becomes different

RA

78. My wife started to take (TC) with me; having her do something with you that she really enjoys is a real plus
79. Every time I go (to the Dr.) he asks me you know ' you still doin' tc'; he does encourage tc
80. I get the impression from him that, TC's helped my overall physical being in some way
81. Now that we're retired, TC gives the week some kind of focus
82. I had some idea of accomplishment
83. I can, do it with, a certain amount of flowing
84. I thought 'well, it's gonna be good for my health' (in first year)
85. (I thought) 'one year wasn't gonna do it'
86. (I thought) 'I can feel some benefits after the first year'
87. I feel really good when I do TC (ongoing & early on)
88. I Felt Better (early on)
89. It kept your mind off work, off everything for awhile
90. (TC's) always an ongoing, learning system
91. you have to judge that by watching the senior instructors and compare
92. there's very few moves that you can't improve on
93. the more you work on (TC), the more it opens up to you

Stan

94. Coming at noon hour has given me a real positive boost
95. I don't particularly like to exercise in the evenings before I go to bed
96. TC has an appeal in terms of being always challenging and interesting to learn
97. We realized that, we could likely cope with it
98. If I ever kinda thought that I'd give it up, what has usually prompted me to keep coming is changing instructors and just finding somebody else's approach
99. I enjoy it and I feel a lot better (flexibility, balance, relaxing, circulation)
100. I think it takes awhile, you know it's not instantaneous
101. The benefits are on the subtle side but, they're clearly there
102. I found it just relaxing, to do it
103. (TC) also exercises different muscles and gives me more I think, it likely helps my circulation a lot more (than my other activities)
104. The more we got into TC the more we liked it
105. You want to be able to complete the training
106. I don't usually like to start something and then give it up, without giving it a fair shot
107. Some of the stories I've heard over the years are very good testimonials as to why,one should do TC
108. I like doing TC in a group atmosphere
109. I actually, look forward to doing the (TC) sets, because there's a number of moves in there I just like doing
110. I actually find the atmosphere (of the TC class) quite relaxing, nice
111. Nice people here
112. The instructors have all been, good and very helpful
113. I think TC is far better than riding a stationary bike, in terms of maintaining interest

Comprehensive Paraphrase List
III. Lived Experience of Tai Chi Practice

Catherine

1. The movement of TC is like a slow, beautiful dance
2. (TC) is synchronized movement
3. It's like watching a moving fortress
4. I enjoy the Chinese music (that we have with TC)
5. It's a total necessity to be mentally and physically in touch with what's going on and where you're supposed to be (when you do TC)
6. TC requires concentration
7. The main point is to focus on the movements as you do them
8. If I'm distracted or thinking about other things I (don't) remember the routine
9. if you're in a group of people you just fit right back in but if you're alone, you have to start all over again
10. I can be thrown off and distracted by someone coming into the room during a round, or by the proximity of someone
11. I'm not too terribly aware of everyone else in the class, except my teacher, when I'm doing (TC)
12. At a certain point in the tc routine, I almost inevitably take a deep breath – it just occurs - you've achieved some maximum level of, of well-being
13. There is a relief, and the relief is expressed as a sort of a big sigh, a big breath, you've achieved some maximum level of, of well-being
14. You lose the sensation of the overt physical act (of doing TC)
15. With TC, your hands, mind and the sword become one unit
16. TC is a more meditative approach to life
17. (Sitting meditation and TC) perform a calming and a lining up of thought processes, rather than a jamming of thought processes whereby you feel like you're getting bombarded by all of the things you have to do
18. Doing (TC) is an aesthetic experience that is enhanced by the addition of a natural element
19. I'm a part of the geography of the group
20. I like to do [tc, sword] outside in natural surroundings, or when the sun's shining through the window and everything is quiet
21. I found the places along the lake, under the trees, where I can do the Sword, outside(in) the mottled sun, and that was an aesthetic experience
22. TC's a way of seeing what is around you and seeing yourself in relation to that surrounding
23. I'm not so sure you can separate aesthetics and spirituality - Just experiencing the (TC) movements (in a natural environment) would be (like) the service of a church
24. If you (don't) remember the last steps you were taught you (look) at your classmates to see what to do
25. When you forget the step (in TC) it's embarrassing, sort of unnerving
26. (TC) complements sitting meditation
27. TC is so physically active (in contrast to sitting meditation, which is) absolutely motionless, and all of the attention focuses inward.

Sally

28. I'm concentrating on the set and what's the next move
29. In doing the (TC) set I'm very aware of what my physical body is doing
30. There is an energy flow associated with doing TC
31. It can be within, but it's around you as well, whether you're doing (TC) individually or in a group

32. I can feel a sense of rhythm and flow to (my) body as (I'm) doing tc - your body feels as though it's part of that flow
33. When you're doing tc sets in the group that has learned a full set and is doing it well – you can also feel that interchange of energy within the group
34. Just the physical fact that you're all moving at the same time - you can really see the rhythm of the movements
35. There is a flow that I think I just want to call connectedness with other people
36. When you know the (TC) set well you can go inside (yourself) and do some of the meditative stuff
37. I can do the (TC) set and I lose the room - move into that meditative or spiritual space
38. There's no need for you to say to yourself, 'now what do I do next?' - the movements just come
39. With concentration (on TC) comes a detachment from the immediate environment, from other things that might have been crowding your mind before you got to the tc class
40. Detachment allows you to stay with TC in physical, mental, and spiritual state
41. I can achieve that state to a greater or lesser extent, depending on what's going on in my life
42. (When) the advanced students do the whole set- that's when I can feel (that state of detachment)
43. I think I'm pretty tuned in to the real world, the room, the people, the clock and so on, so I never quite lose my, my sense of attachment to those things
44. We finish the set and you bring your hands down to the side and it's a peaceful, quiet moment. - as though you're wrapped up in a nice warm blanket
45. The sense of just having a more even balance of energy within my body is there
46. The centeredness, the grounded feeling is there
47. A sense of peace, of well-being is there
48. What I feel, is that internal sense of bringing in something peaceful
49. It also has a component of feeling quiet - the chatter is gone
50. To me that's far more than physical, you're really paying attention to the inner self
51. (When I'm doing a set I don't know as well) physically, I think I tighten up
52. I feel my shoulders tighten, and I feel my lower back tighten
53. I notice that my coordination may be off a little bit
54. I don't keep my balance as well
55. You run a big risk of being hard on yourself at that time
56. (With a set you know well) even if you do make a mistake you don't belabour it

Ben

57. When I first start the moves, my mind is on gettin' ready
58. Mentally I isolate myself from surrounding area – examples – sight and sound
59. Then I picture myself 'on' - Refresh in my mind the beginning of each move
60. Once the get-ready mode's finished, and I'm practising (TC) I totally relax
61. Your problems are forgotten
62. My mind doesn't think about anything
63. The moves come automatically
64. Everything else just disappears
65. I don't think about anybody, in fact I don't even see anybody
66. Like a daydream world
67. I feel like on a cloud - The rhythmic motion of the moves, makes me feel at ease and soothes my body and mind
68. Time Seems to Not Exist - I lose time
69. Whenever I do tc, visualization for me to relax, comes naturally

70. Sometimes if I visualize, too strongly, I lose my place in the moves
71. I can visualize the stream with the leaves falling into it, the smell of fall, you know, dead leaves if that, particular thing
72. Another one would be, desert. I can feel the heat, I can feel the sand in my toes eh, when I'm doin' these (TC) moves
73. When I finish (practising TC) I come back to reality
74. The music and the (TC) moves went hand in hand – the music blends with the moves
75. The music that went along with (TC) totally relaxes you on the TC moves
76. If I do TC without music it's not as relaxing

Shirley

77. Once I get into the (TC) routine, I can relax
78. I'm concentrating on the (TC) moves
79. I'm not thinking about the people around me or anything
80. There were times (when) I got so relaxed I forgot my next step
81. I'm not thinking of the problems around me, when I do my TC
82. Doing TC without music it's horrible, I don't like it - I have to have that music there, it is so relaxing
83. I can't concentrate that much when there's no music
84. When there's music it makes me very peaceful inside and I, just forget about everything.
85. Tai Chi music is very relaxing to listen to even without doing Tai Chi moves
86. The music relaxes my mind and body

Cathy

87. Meditation in motion
88. I feel very quiet and calm inside – at peace with myself and the whole world
89. I just visualize what I'm doing and what my next move will be
90. You're not thinking about (what you have to do, what's happening outside the classroom)
91. I quite often think about (my TC master)
92. (You) have peripheral view, so that you can stay together (with the group) - what we call the 'tai chi eye'
93. That doesn't take away from your meditative work, it helps to keep it that way
94. I can feel my spine stretching and turning [physical]
95. You try to get your weight in what we call the bubbling springs- (the ball) of your foot
96. When you put your hands up your hands are like feathers, you know they don't weigh anything
97. You feel your internals being massaged
98. I know for myself that, you know my inside, my internals are working more and I can feel my chi moving around if you are totally relaxed
99. I can do it (tc) by myself and be totally relaxed and feel even more than when I'm with the group
100. Your breathing's even and relaxed and you don't have to think about your breathing

Anne

101. (TC is) a series of slow, movements, which are almost like a dance
102. (TC) is a combination of both (relaxation and meditation)
103. If I'm practising (TC) alone then I get into the relaxation and the meditation
104. I do get it (the relaxation and the meditation) in the class but not as often cause usually something will distract me

105. (TC is) walking meditation - You do the set without thinking, your body just flows with it, and your mind just seems to detach
106. It doesn't happen all the time
107. It's not something you can make yourself do
108. I'll just get through a set and suddenly say 'I've finished it?" - you lose track of time, you sorta go blank
109. You're aware that you're doing tc, but everything else seems to move off into the background
110. It's almost as if you're in a bubble – there's nothing else around you. It's a timelessness feeling
111. Sometimes you'll come back before you finish the set, like it'll only be a momentary thing within the set, that'll occur
112. When the timelessness bubble appears, nothing (goes through my mind)
113. The timelessness the bubble comes in once you've mastered the moves - your body remembers the moves and does the moves so your mind can go elsewhere
114. (Transcendence is) that timelessness bubble, that takes you beyond, off someplace else
115. That's the same, shutting out of the world, the same bubble feeling that I get when I meditate-it's just that I happen to be moving when it happens at tc
116. You get into (doing TC) and you forget where you are (in the TC set)
117. There's a whole lot of things to keep in mind while you're doing (TC)
118. (I'm) trying to focus on doing the set correctly - There's the placement of feet and the placement of your body the placement of your arms and shoulders.
119. you're keeping track of where you are in the set
120. you're keeping track of what the next move is going to be
121. you're keeping track of where you're going to go for the next move -watch out for the people on either side of you
122. I can feel where my body is aching and where I need to put a little less stress on the body or a little more stress on the body
123. If (the pain is) really bad I'll focus in on it to get rid of it (during TC)
124. I focused on those spots that were extremely painful, and, in my mind I was gently stretching the muscles that were tight
125. If I'm not in (as much) pain then I'll just detach from it and you know, detach from my body
126. If you move the right way (in TC) you can feel the energy moving
127. My hands and my feet, started tingling
128. I could feel the power, the energy, between my hands
129. The entire room feels like it's filled with energy
130. When there've been 50 or 60 people (with enough advanced students) here all doing the same thing it's almost as if, there's an energy flowing in the room that propels you, and it just keeps you going
131. You are a part of this group and this group is generating an energy, which you can feel, you know and it's just, it's just all in the entire room
132. With the tc you're using your brain to focus on something that's physical within your body
133. I may lose sense of time if I'm doing something intricate (with a paintbrush, or cross-stitch), but it's not going to get rid of my pain, it's probably going to get worse
134. I think if you immerse yourself in anything, it can lead to some introspection or this sort of thought pattern, which you do with tc, but not to the same extent because you're also using your brain to focus on something which is not physical, whereas with the tc you're using your brain to focus on something that's physical within your body
135. I think I'm more relaxed (doing TC) outdoors - I like being outside - it's a little more peaceful outside for me

RA

136. I can always tell, what kind of a set it's gonna be, for me, when I do the first bow I can tell how loose my back is, and how loose my hips are, right then [body]
137. I'm looking for that extra feeling (of stretch) [body]
138. I feel really good when I do TC - Your body just feels good [physical]
139. I always try to remember all the things (the instructors) tell you (when I'm doing the TC set) [mind]
140. There's always 2 or 3 moves that I'm not satisfied with and I'm working on myself
141. I try to watch someone more experienced than I am
142. Your mind is functioning but it's really free [mind]
143. (TC) becomes such a habit that your body can do it, and your brain is now, free
144. I don't plan it, it just happens
145. Sometimes your mind is almost blank
146. I think that's where "moving meditation" would come in - It's like meditation would be I think if I could do meditation
147. It happens only when I'm in the middle of the group
148. Like dream state
149. You're not as aware of (people and sounds around you) as you normally would be but you can still pick (them) up
150. You kinda like come out of a daze
151. You've been doing (TC) without thinking at all - I could be partway through the set and not even realize that I've done it
152. Sometimes you're thinking maybe what you have to do in the afternoon, or maybe something that's bothering you, comes into focus [mind]
153. If (I) get too far out of focus I get lost – I want to miss a set of moves

Stan

154. My body feels good - just moving the muscles in my arms and legs feels good
155. I'm just kind of absorbed in the moves and what's coming next, making sure you're executing (the moves) properly
156. Concentrating on TC sorta blocks out a lot of other noises going on, in your mind
157. I don't seem to uh get that level of intensity at home (compared to a group atmosphere)
158. We can go for an hour on group exercises - doing it at home I rarely go as long as 15 or 20 minutes
159. You just don't get the concentration (at home) - things distract you easily
160. (In class) you don't have to concentrate as much on what's coming up cause you can get a clue, just watching the instructor
161. TC is not as absorbing or as fun as a game

Comprehensive Paraphrase List
IV. Perceived Outcomes of Tai Chi Practice

Catherine

1. Part of the beauty of tc is that...you kind of achieve the means and the ends simultaneously (i.e. the outcome is inseparable from the experience of TC)
2. TC helps the difficult symptoms (of menopause)
3. There is the social component – an offer of fellowship
4. (TC's) an offer of routine
5. TC I think has a leveling, calming effect
6. If (TC) helps you to control your urges to eat or your urges to indulge in self-pity or your urges to verbally lash out then it's of enormous value
7. (TC) moves the energy (chi) around in your body – this creates good circulation and adequate respiration and an alignment of all of the organs of the body, and consequent emotional balance
8. In tc you can breathe deeply, profoundly, at least once per session
9. I can remember things more clearly than I might have if I were not doing (TC)
10. (TC) has improved my concentration skills
11. It's just more pleasing to be able to have more facts at your fingertips
12. When I learn tc I sort of anticipate, sometimes, which move comes next, all the while trying to concentrate on the move I'm doing, and this same thing seems to be occurring in you know, say, the driving a route
13. I just don't withdraw from challenging situations as much as I used to
14. I don't mind stating my opinion when before, I might have just let things slide
15. TC makes you decisive and strong
16. Doing tc seems to help you make observations about yourself
17. (TC) helps you make decisions and keep them more solidly than you would if you weren't doing it
18. (TC) helps us transcend everyday concerns, struggles or dilemmas
19. (TC) seem(s) to be a way of lessening the pain of disappointment and concern
20. I can do TC to deal with some of my own aggressive feelings
21. (TC) enables you to – to handle things in a wiser method
22. (TC) is actually self-defense, but not self-defense in an aggressive way, more in an internal building way
23. Before I practised (meditation) or tc...I would react without consideration more often
24. With tc, it's a more meditative approach to life and you can consider what it (the aggravating comment or the act) is
25. If you can control your movements you can control your thoughts
26. TC helps you more fully appreciate life
27. TC helps me to get more from (nature)
28. You will find life more pleasant, and that you will have more to give of quality

Sally

29. You do benefit from TC, physically, and mentally and emotionally
30. You need to try (TC) in order to see that benefit
31. There's a physical form of energy that is in a better state, because of the tc
32. I know that (TC) has improved my fitness and continues to do that
33. I notice benefit in my muscles
34. TC's good for muscle toning
35. I notice benefit in my circulation
36. TC's good for increasing vascular capacity

37. I just feel better after I've done the set
38. I notice benefit in my tolerance for climbing stairs and other uh graded – like a mountain
39. Surprised myself one day by being able to walk up all the wooden stairs from the parking lot on – beside Grierson Hill
40. The TC set just enhances that (feeling centered, grounded, peaceful, self-confident [mental/emotional]
41. After an hour's worth of TC, I know that I feel more centered and rejuvenated
42. Centering means being still, quieting the chatter that's around you and in you – um, and the chatter isn't necessarily a group of people in the room, but just the buzz that you've got around you from, say, what you've come from before you came to this point, or uh, the problems of the day
43. The sense of just having a more even balance of energy within my body is there
44. The grounded feeling is there
45. grounding means having your feet on the floor, or the ground, and being aware that you have a solid place, that you feel the soles of your feet
46. A sense of peace (is there)
47. My eyes feel brighter
48. Sense of well-being is improved
49. Improv(es) your ability to put thoughts together
50. You want to feel, put together well, when your finished. TC does that
51. Everything feels more relaxed
52. You feel more alert
53. You have more energy
54. When (I've) done a tc set my problems are not quite as burdensome
55. I can come in with a number of things on my mind. But I do find, that over even the first half of the 2 hours (of TC practise) I let go of those fairly quickly
56. (TC) provided me with a better foundation of self-confidence [mental/emotional]
57. You bring your self-confidence back into line
58. Doing tc helped to raise some emotional things and bring things into focus that I might have otherwise have just held and buried underneath [mental/emotional]
59. Muscles are released because you've been holding them and you know there's some emotional holding there and the act of physical exercise helps to release some of that
60. If there is an 'issue' you may gain some insight
61. (TC) opened me to look at the whole person and the various ways in which we try to remain balanced and healthy
62. TC has provided one component of strengthening the connection with my spiritual self [Spiritual]
63. I see tc as a facilitator, a part of what helped me, rather than thinking of a god in the framework of Christian doctrine, to think more in terms of a spiritual presence and a spiritual presence within the individual, that transcends those doctrines
64. TC has contributed to who I am and how I view my fellow man and the world

Ben

65. TC's good if you've go aches and pains, sore back or whatever [Physical]
66. I went to tc – (my elbow) felt better, and then I practised a little bit and it felt better yet
67. I had sciatica in my back - somehow or another I practised enough (TC) that I guess it worked itself loose
68. Before I took TC I was always tense, never relaxed - once we start taking tc, that feeling kinda slowly fade(d) away [Emotional/Mental]
69. When I do the TC moves, it relaxes me
70. When you relax you don't think about anything so stress is gone

71. I feel good after I leave
72. The rhythmic motion of the moves soothes my body and mind
73. (TC) rids my body of the daily grind and troubles of the day
74. Sometimes if I have lots on my mind, if you're worrying about something, when I do practise TC, that seems to disappear - your problems are forgotten.
    • Troubles and that, like we're having now in the world, they have that won't even fizz on me when I'm doing this (TC) [overlap with LE]

Shirley

75. Once we (get) into the (TC) routine, (my arthritic knees) start to feel a little bit better [Physical]
76. (Arthritis symptoms) gradually go away - and then I can start bending a little bit more
77. Once I'm back into the routine and faithfully doing TC, it does help (the arthritis in my knees and my lower back)
78. • Helps (as far as pain and flexibility) [verified with Shirley]
79. Hopefully (if I) continue the TC that would help strengthen the bones
80. (TC) has helped depression/stress [Mental/Emotional]
81. (TC) took a While to get used to
82. I can concentrate better- I'm not thinking of the problems around me, when I do my tc
83. I'll get depressed now and then you know, but it's nothing like before that I had to go on pills - I am not on any medication (for depression or anxiety currently)
84. Tai Chi has helped me to relax and come out of my shell
85. I have a little bit more confidence, in myself
86. I'm not that nervous person that I used to be
87. I can speak in front of people

Cathy

88. (TC) has changed me totally
89. Physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually
90. I feel a lot better, healthier, stronger, a lot younger than I did 10 years ago
91. I have a lot of energy - I can do everything now
92. Before, I would be so tired without doing anything
93. (My husband) said 'well, you look so much better I'm going to try TC too' [verification by outside source]
94. After (TC), I got rid of my medications
95. I haven't taken anything for my arthritis for the last at least 5 1/2 years
96. I haven't used any of (my inhalers) for I don't know how many years
97. I'm taking half and sometimes less than half (the medication) the dr. prescribes for me
98. I had diverticulitis - I don't have any trouble with my bowels (now)
99. My blood pressure is fine
100. I don't think how I could cope with a sick husband if I didn't have TC [Mental/Emotional]
101. I think you get a lot of spiritual benefits out of tc
102. TC will bring out emotions in people - All the stuff that you have stored inside, all your resentment, it comes out – TC brings it to the surface and people learn to deal with it
103. I had a lot of resentment from things that had happened way way back - that's all past, forget about it, just try, try to be different person
104. Things that were important, are not important anymore
105. What other people think of me doesn't bother me anymore
106. I used to be hard on myself and critical
107. Money, is not that important anymore
108. Compassion has become my main priority

109. Helping other people, especially the people that are less fortunate and can't move as well as I do, the poor people
110. I have learned to Connect Mind Spirit and Body and to connect with the outer world

Anne

111. (TC) allows me to move and at the same time detach from the pain that I feel, from the OA [physical/mental]
112. The more I did (the TC exercises), the less pain I had
113. When we did finish TC, the pain was at a bearable level
114. TC has kept me limber, flexible
115. If I hadn't been doing tc, I would probably be walking with a cane right now because of the OA in my hip, and in my back
116. (TC's) a way of becoming familiar with my body – it's just enhanced that feeling of proprioception, knowing where your body is in space
117. When there is something wrong with my body, I'm more aware of it
118. At the end of a set, I usually feel relaxed, and tired
119. My heartbeat has hit a very high level, but it goes back to normal very quickly
120. I have far better lung capacity than I had before
121. I have a lot more stamina than I used to have, even though I was more physically active before
122. I have a lot more stay-with-it power just to carry on day to day (e.g. Running up and down stairs, walking the dog, general housework, gardening)
123. The diverticulosis has sort of calmed down
124. The meditation aspect of the tc plus my meditation has lessened all the stress then the diverticulosis has sort of calmed down
125. I haven't had one of those bad migraines for a year and a half now, almost 2 years
126. I found that as soon as I started with the tc, the less stress I was feeling (and) the migraines started to get less and less and less
127. (Doing a mental TC set is) also good at night when you're trying to get to sleep if you can't get to sleep – It's better than counting sheep!
128. TC is part of my coping strategies - (has) allowed me to get in touch with myself and that self is very stress resistant [Emotional]
129. (TC) does tend to relax me, mentally – it's a trigger to relax me when I'm in a semi-stressful situation
130. When I'm in a stressful situation, I can sort of stop for a minute, take a deep breath, and say, 'this is not going to bother me as much as it would have'
131. I can sit there and I can do a (mental) tc set, and that will lead on to other things, you know, what, what's been stressing me lately
132. I find that (TC) helps, with my memory – it's one of those things that exercises your brain [Mental (Memory)]
133. I've tuned a portion of my brain to accept anything that has to be done in sequence, which is kinda neat (e.g. computer)
134. TC is a gentle way of leading me into myself to find out what I believe [Spiritual]
135. I think tc it puts you in touch with yourself, as a practise. When you do a physical exercise that requires that you, pay attention to yourself and what your body is doing, it also makes you pay attention to what your mind is thinking. And that can lead you, in, further into a spiritual quest – at least it did for me
136. For people who are searching I think it (tc) can lead them, into a further study – not necessarily of Buddhism or Taoism, but into their own spirituality
137. (TC) has led me into the search of other religions

RA

138. By the end of the class I feel a lot better (Physically)
139. (The arthritis pain) eases right up, sometimes it goes entirely away by the time I'm through the class
140. TC) builds up leg strength in the muscles in your knees, around your knee joint – it's an extension of rehab
141. (TC) loosens everything up
142. After the (tc) set, we do the final bow, I can quite often see a difference there, you know, depending on how bad it was to start, maybe I can gain maybe another inch, just by loosening everything up
143. Another thing that came out of (TC) was balance (outdoors)
144. Even after the first while I began to have more confidence in, you know in, the kind of a reaction you would have if you slipped
145. I think I'm more relaxed, all the time [mental/emotional]
146. Generally I feel more relaxed around people than I did before
147. I don't get uptight and angry so much and it doesn't last
148. I don't get out of control like I used to
149. I have a casual feeling about the whole relation ship between man and religion [spiritual]
150. It's (a) one day at a time kind of thing - don't dwell on what's gonna happen after you leave this life. That's kinda gone now - I'm like 'who cares'
151. If you do enough of this (TC) stuff you, you start noticing other people (move) too

Stan

152. The benefits are on the subtle side but, they're clearly there
153. It's not like a high-powered pill or something where you automatically feel better - I think it takes awhile, you know it's not instantaneous
154. The arthritis isn't as severe - (TC) keeps it under control [physical]
155. I have more flexibility
156. I don't have as much soreness
157. I think (TC) helps my circulation [physical]
158. Your heart rate goes up
159. I think that it helps keep my blood pressure under control
160. You're not as inclined to have cold hands and feet
161. You're not as inclined to feel sluggish or have slight headaches
162. My muscles are firmer - I think they're toned up more [physical]
163. (TC) exercises different muscles (than other exercises I do)
164. I Think TC Helps My General Mobility [physical]
165. I think (TC) helps my flexibility
166. I think (TC) helps my balance
167. Improved (physical) function (climbing stairs, getting in/out of chairs, cars, walking longer, less soreness, move faster)
    - *I can go up and down stairs better*
    - *I can get in and out of chairs*
    - *I can get in and out of cars better*
    - *I can walk for longer periods without sore knees*
    - *I have less soreness of knees at bedtime and during the nite*
    - *(I can) generally move faster*
168. I've often felt refreshed (after TC) [mental/emotional]
169. TC is a Great Distraction - blocks out other noises going on in your mind
170. I find (TC) relaxing [mental/emotional]

Appendix I

Between-Participant Analysis, Stage 2 - Paraphrases and Meaning Units

Between-Participant Analysis
Meaning Units
I. Motivation for Initiation of Tai Chi Practice

Paraphrases	Meaning Units
• There was a Buddhist monk doing tc [C]	I saw TC in Action
• I saw (TC), in action - We would stand and watch the TC group doing demonstrations at the fringe [Sally]	
• (The TV) showed people doing tc, in Beijing. And I thought 'gee that looks neat!'...I had seen other programs on TV [Anne]	
• I came down here (to the TC class) and watched (the TC group) do a set [RA]	
• A TC instructor put on some demonstrations for us [Stan]	
• We were very impressed by her flexibility, what great shape (she was in) [Stan]	
• It was quite beautiful [C]	I thought it was quite beautiful
• just thought it was absolutely beautiful [Anne]	
• I liked watching these people moving in unison [Sally]	I liked watching these people move in unison
• I like(d) the slowness of tc [Sally]	
• I was picking up the energy that flowed within that group and out to some of us who were standing there watching [Sally]	
• I saw all these people moving together in really close unison [RA]	
• I liked the way the moves were controlled [RA]	
• (I liked) the idea of being able to join in a group and move with them, and, feel that relaxed while you were doing it [RA]	
• It [the osteoporosis dx] increased my fervour for physical (exercise) overall, but it couldn't be excessive because might break a bone, crush a vertebrae [C]	I didn't think TC would be hard on my body

• We didn't want to run – it's hard on the feet and on your body [Ben] • Slow martial art would be ideal- older people can't take kung fu because it's kinda strenuous [Ben] • I thought 'well, yeah, I could probably do that' because it's not like some of the other martial arts that are vicious and fast and, lot of body contact [RA] • It's not a 'Hard' Exercise [Stan] • It wasn't difficult on my knees, it was actually helpful [Stan]	
• I was thinking 'you should get into some kind of an exercise' - we weren't doing too much for activity at all [Ben] • We walked but we should get into something other than walking [Ben] • I always have been very active- I had to give that up so, only thing I was still doing was walking, and I didn't find that quite enough [Cathy] • I was very physically active - I didn't want to lose what I had gained from that activity [Anne]	I wanted to be physically active
• I discovered that I had osteoporosis – it increased my fervour for TC [C] • I was having a lot of trouble with my knees [RA]	I thought it could help a health problem
• The head monk said (tc is) an excellent thing to combine with meditation [C] • (My previous TC instructor) recommended that I go to study under (my present instructor) [C] • (My husband said) 'We're gonna join Tai Chi'...'you're gonna do it' [Shirley] • My) Doctor said 'Why don't you join Tai Chi for your stress/depression' [Shirley] • Our son said to me, 'Mum you should do tc' [Cathy]	Someone I know told me to try TC

• (My wife said) 'well you should maybe try (tc) or look into it' [RA]	
• I saw a course advertised [C]	I had heard about TC or saw it advertised
• The ad caught my eye [Ben]	
• I had heard about it [Cathy]	
• I had seen it advertised [Cathy]	
• (I had) heard some women talking at the university about it. [Anne]	
• I think there was some, some advertisement in the paper [Stan]	
• (The TC class is) not very far from where we live [C]	The class was conveniently located
• The after work, once a week program offered at (my workplace) was ideal [Sally]	
• It was only 5 minutes from my home [Cathy]	
• It was in one of the schools in the neighbourhood - close to home [Anne]	
• It was close to home [RA]	
• This (location) is actually closer, easier to get to (than others) [Stan]	
• I had retired by the time I actually started to practice intensely [C]	I had enough time to practice
• Although I had a lot of studying, I still had a little extra time (so I started TC). After that it became a little more hectic and I just didn't have time [Anne]	
• When I finally got enough time then I started TC [Anne]	

Between-Participant Analysis
Meaning Units
II. Motivation for Continuation of Tai Chi Practice

Paraphrases	**Meaning Units**
• I sort of let the tc be my focus for the week [C]	TC gives the week some focus
• Now that we're retired, TC gives the week some kind of focus [RA]	
• We enjoy it [C]	**I know what takes me to TC is that I enjoy it (doing TC/the class)**
• I know what takes me there is that I do enjoy it [Sally]	
• (TC leader) makes it enjoyable (he does not place an overly high demand on the group of students) [Sally]	
• I enjoy doing (TC) [Shirley]	
• I liked it very much - we liked the class right off the bat [Ben]	
• I like doin' the tc moves [Ben]	
• It's, it's not just for the exercise, it's just for doin' it (TC) [Ben]	
• I got really hooked right from the beginning - really liked it [Cathy]	
• I thought ' well this (TC) is neat and I like doing it and I enjoy doing it' [Anne]	
• I enjoy it [Stan]	
• The more we got into TC the more we liked it [Stan]	
• I actually, look forward to doing the (TC) sets, because there's a number of moves in there I just like doing [Stan]	
• We have fun [Sally]	It's a fun class
• We have a lot of fun doin' (TC)/ It's a fun class [Ben]	

• It's lots of fun [Shirley]	
• I'm learning from a very good teacher [C] • The instructors have all been good [Stan]	The teacher is very good
• There's a helpfulness [Sally] • The instructors have all been ...very helpful [Stan]	People in the class are very helpful (teachers, other students)
• I enjoy doing it with the group [C] • I'm a part of the geography of that group [C] • (the TC master) is a very personable individual, as a leader [Sally] • The other helpers are very personable individuals [Sally] • The tone of this group is very good [Sally] • There's a conviviality (in the tc group) [Sally] • There's a camaraderie [Sally] • No one there doing any sort of um, judging or putting you down [Sally] • We can use that word 'community' if you like [Sally] • The people are very nice nice [Ben] • The social functions are nice [Ben] • I enjoy the people – we've made a lot of friends [Shirley] • It's the companionship, and the friendships, that evolve from coming to do tc [Anne] • It's friendly, it's accepting [Anne]	The people in the TC group are nice - It's a community feeling

• It's a community feeling (it does become a support group and almost an extended family) [Anne] • Nice people here [Stan] • I actually find the atmosphere (of the TC class) quite relaxing, nice [Stan]	
• I practice tc cause I like the results [C] • I suspect (TC is) very good for me, from what I've observed [C] • The benefit is always there • I feel good when I've finished (I do come out with that improved sense of well-being) [Sally] • I feel good after I leave (I find it's relaxing) [Ben] • I found the more I did (TC) the better I felt [Cathy] • The physical (and mental) aspects of doing TC I find beneficial to me (keeps me limber, mentally alert, allows me to move and at the same time detach from the pain) [Anne] • I feel really good when I do TC [RA] • The benefits are on the subtle side but, they're clearly there • I feel a lot better (flexibility, balance, relaxing, circulation, I found it just relaxing, to do it) [Stan]	I feel good/better after doing TC - TC benefits me (Detailed in Perceived Outcomes)
• I know that a certain amount of physical exercise per week is important for one's overall health, um, so, I'll come to tc [Sally] • It would have to be the exercise [Ben] • I enjoy it very much for an exercise which I never thought was an exercise [Shirley]	I do TC for the exercise

• (TC) also exercises different muscles (than my other activities) [Stan]	
• I concluded that if TC helped to keep (my TC master) physically and mentally alert, until age 89, it must have something for everyone [C] • There was a time when I was threatening to quit but (my wife) told me not to and, we're still there [Ben] • All my doctors have always said, 'stay with the tc [Anne] • Every time I go (to the Dr.) he asks me you know ' you still doin' tc'; he does encourage tc • I get the impression from (my doctor) that, TC's helped my overall physical being in some way [RA] • Some of the stories I've heard over the years are very good testimonials as to why one should do TC [Stan]	Someone encouraged me (directly or indirectly) to stay with TC
• I have to keep going back to refresh my memory [Ben] • Even (if) you learn it (tc) and you say 'yes I know it' you have to go and refine it [Cathy] • You,never learn tc completely • As your body responds to what you're doing, it becomes different • TC never becomes repetitive [Anne] • (TC's) always an ongoing, learning system • There's very few moves that you can't improve on [RA] • TC has an appeal in terms of being always challenging and interesting to learn [Stan]	TC has an appeal in terms of being always challenging and interesting to learn – you never learn it completely

• If you can (watch and compare instructors), that keeps your interest up [RA] • If I ever kinda thought that I'd give it up, what has usually prompted me to keep coming is changing instructors and just finding somebody else's approach [Stan]	Comparing instructors keeps your interest up

Between-Participant Analysis
Meaning Units
III. Lived Experience of Tai Chi Practice & Four Types of Detachment

Between-Participant Analysis
Meaning Units
III. Lived Experience of Tai Chi Practice

Paraphrases	Meaning Units
External Features	
• There is an energy flow associated with doing TC [Sally] • (The energy flow) can be within, but it's around you as well, whether you're doing (TC) individually or in a group [Sally] • When you're doing tc sets in the group that has learned a full set and is doing it well – you can also feel that interchange of energy within the group [Sally] • There is a flow that I think I just want to call connectedness with other people [Sally] • The entire room feels like it's filled with energy [Anne] • When there've been 50 or 60 people (with enough advanced students) here all doing the same thing it's almost as if, there's an energy flowing in the room that propels you, and it just keeps you going [Anne] • You are a part of this group and this group is generating an energy, which you can feel, you know and it's just all in the entire room [Anne]	When you're doing TC in a group that has learned it well, you can feel an energy flowing in the room
• It's a total necessity to be mentally and physically in touch with what's going on and where you're supposed to be (when you do TC) [C] • TC requires concentration [C] • The main point is to focus on the movements as you do them [C] • In doing the (TC) set I'm very aware of what my physical body is doing [Sally] • I'm concentrating on the set and what's the next move [Sally] • I'm concentrating on the (TC) moves [Shirley] • I just visualize what I'm doing and what my next move will be [Cathy]	I'm concentrating on where I am in the TC set and on executing the moves properly

• (I'm) trying to focus on doing the set correctly - There's the placement of feet and the placement of your body the placement of your arms and shoulders [Anne] • You're keeping track of where you are in the set [Anne] • You're keeping track of what the next move is going to be [Anne] • You're keeping track of where you're going to go for the next move -watch out for the people on either side of you [Anne] • I'm just kind of absorbed in the moves and what's coming next, making sure you're executing (the moves) properly [Stan] • I don't seem to uh get that level of intensity at home (compared to a group atmosphere) - You just don't get the concentration (at home) - things distract you easily [Stan]	
• I'm aware of my teacher cause I like to gauge my speed according to hers [C] • (You) have peripheral view, so that you can stay together (with the group) - what we call the 'tai chi eye' [Cathy] • Watch out for the people on either side of you [Anne] • You can get a clue, just watching the instructor [Stan]	I'm aware of others around me
• I enjoy the Chinese music (that we have with TC) [C] • The music and the (TC) moves went hand in hand – the music blends with the moves [Ben] • The music that went along with (TC) totally relaxes you on the TC moves [Ben] • If I do TC without music it's not as relaxing [Ben] • Doing TC without music it's horrible, I don't like it - I have to have that music there, it is so relaxing [Shirley]	I enjoy the music – it blends with the TC moves and totally relaxes you

• I can't concentrate that much when there's no music [Shirley] • When there's music it makes me very peaceful inside and I, just forget about everything [Shirley] • Tai Chi music is very relaxing to listen to even without doing Tai Chi moves [Shirley] • The music relaxes my mind and body [Shirley]	
• I like to do [tc] outside in natural surroundings, or when the sun's shining through the window and everything is quiet [C] • I think I'm more relaxed (doing TC) outdoors - I like being outside - it's a little more peaceful outside for me [Anne]	Doing TC outdoors is quiet and peaceful
Internal Experiences • I can feel a sense of rhythm and flow to (my) body as (I'm) doing tc - your body feels as though it's part of that flow [Sally] • I feel like on a cloud - The rhythmic motion of the moves, makes me feel at ease and soothes my body and mind [Ben] • Your body just flows with it [Anne]	Your body feels as though it's part of a flow
• At a certain point in the tc routine, I almost inevitably take a deep breath – it just occurs [C] • There is an energy flow associated with doing TC [Sally] • (The energy flow) can be within [you] [Sally] • The sense of just having a more even balance of energy within my body is there [Sally]	You're really paying attention to what is happening inside your body

• To me that's far more than physical, you're really paying attention to the inner self [Sally] • I can feel my spine stretching and turning [Cathy] • You try to get your weight in what we call the bubbling springs- (the ball) of your foot [Cathy] • When you put your hands up your hands are like feathers, you know they don't weigh anything [Cathy] • You feel your internals being massaged [Cathy] • I know for myself that, you know my inside, my internals are working more and I can feel my chi moving around if you are totally relaxed [Cathy] • I can feel where my body is aching and where I need to put a little less stress on the body or a little more stress on the body [Anne] • I focused on those spots that were extremely painful, and, in my mind I was gently stretching the muscles that were tight [Anne] • If you move the right way (in TC) you can feel the energy moving, the chi? - My hands and my feet, started tingling, I could feel the power, the energy, between my hands [Anne] • When I do the first bow I can tell how loose my back is, and how loose my hips are, right then [RA] • I'm looking for that extra feeling (of stretch) [RA] • I feel really good when I do TC - Your body just feels good [RA] • My body feels good - just moving the muscles in my arms and legs feels good [Stan]	
• There's no need for you to say to yourself, 'now what do I do next?' - the movements just come [Sally] • The moves come automatically [Ben]	When you know the TC set well, the moves come automatically, you do them without thinking

• You do the set without thinking, your body just flows with it [Anne] • You've been doing (TC) without thinking at all - I could be partway through the set and not even realize that I've done it [RA]	
• TC is a more meditative approach [C] • I'm not too terribly aware of everyone else in the class, except my teacher, when I'm doing (TC) [C]	When you know the TC set well, your mind is free to do some of the meditative stuff – there is a detachment from the immediate environment and from problems or other things that might have been crowding your mind
• When you know the (TC) set well you can go inside (yourself) and do some of the meditative stuff [Sally] • With concentration (on TC) comes a detachment from the immediate environment, from other things that might have been crowding your mind before you got to the tc class [Sally] • Detachment allows you to stay with TC in physical, mental, and spiritual state [Sally] • I can do the (TC) set and I lose the room - move into that meditative or spiritual space [Sally] • I can achieve that state to a greater or lesser extent, depending on what's going on in my life [Sally] • (When) the advanced students do the whole set- that's when I can feel (that state of detachment) [Sally] • I think I'm pretty tuned in to the real world, the room, the people, the clock and so on, so I never quite lose my, my sense of attachment to those things [Sally] • Your problems are forgotten [Ben] • Everything else just disappears [Ben] • My mind doesn't think about anything [Ben]	

- I don’t think about anybody, in fact I don’t even see anybody [Ben]
- Time Seems to Not Exist - I lose time [Ben]
- Like a daydream world [Ben]
- I’m not thinking of the problems around me, when I do my TC [Shirley]
- I’m not thinking about the people around me or anything [Shirley]
- Meditation in motion [Cathy]
- You’re not thinking about (what you have to do, what’s happening outside the classroom) [Cathy]
- (TC is) walking meditation - You do the set without thinking, your body just flows with it, and your mind just seems to detach [Anne]
- That’s the same, shutting out of the world, the same bubble feeling that I get when I meditate-it’s just that I happen to be moving when it happens at tc [Anne]
- The timelessness bubble comes in once you’ve mastered the moves - your body remembers the moves and does the moves so your mind can go elsewhere [Anne]
- You’re aware that you’re doing tc, but everything else seems to move off into the background [Anne]
- If I’m not in (as much) pain then I’ll just detach from it and you know, detach from my body [Anne]
- Your mind just seems to detach [Anne]
- It’s almost as if you’re in a bubble – there’s nothing else around you
- It’s a timelessness feeling [Anne]
- I’ll just get through a set and suddenly say ‘I’ve finished it?" - you lose track of time [Anne]
- When the timelessness bubble appears, nothing (goes through my mind) [Anne]
- You sorta go blank [Anne]

- (Transcendence is) that timelessness bubble, that takes you beyond, off someplace else [Anne]
- Sometimes you'll come back before you finish the set, like it'll only be a momentary thing within the set, that'll occur [Anne]
- It doesn't happen all the time [Anne]
- It's not something you can make yourself do [Anne]
- I don't plan it, it just happens [Anne]
- I do get it (the relaxation and the meditation) in the class but not as often cause usually something will distract me [Anne]
- If I'm practising (TC) alone then I get into the relaxation and the meditation [Anne]
- (TC) becomes such a habit that your body can do it, and your brain is now, free [RA]
- Sometimes (your mind) is almost blank. I think that's where "moving meditation" would come in - It's like meditation would be I think if I could do meditation [RA]
- You're not as aware of (people and sounds around you) as you normally would be but you can still pick (them) up [RA]
- Sometimes your mind is almost blank [RA]
- Like dream state [RA]
- It happens only when I'm in the middle of the group [RA]
- Concentrating on TC sorta blocks out a lot of other noises going on, in your mind [Stan]

- (Like sitting meditation, TC) performs a calming and a lining up of thought processes, rather than a jamming of thought processes whereby you feel like you're getting bombarded by all of the things you have to do [C]
- A sense of peace, of well-being is there [Sally]

I totally relax – I feel very quiet and calm inside

- What I feel, is that internal sense of bringing in something peaceful [Sally]
- It also has a component of feeling quiet - the chatter is gone [Sally]
- We finish the set and you bring your hands down to the side and it's a peaceful, quiet moment. - as though you're wrapped up in a nice warm blanket [Sally]
- The centeredness, the grounded feeling is there - Centering means being still, quieting the chatter that's around you and in you –and the chatter isn't necessarily a group of people in the room, but just the buzz that you've got around you from, say, what you've come from before you came to this point, or the problems of the day [Sally]
- I feel like on a cloud - The rhythmic motion of the moves, makes me feel at ease and soothes my body and mind [Ben]
- Once the get-ready mode's finished, and I'm practising (TC) I totally relax [Ben]
- Once I get into the (TC) routine, I can relax [Shirley]
- There were times (when) I got so relaxed I forgot my next step [Shirley]
- I feel very quiet and calm inside – at peace with myself and the whole world [Cathy]
- (TC) is a combination of both (relaxation and meditation) [Anne]
- You get into (doing TC) and you forget where you are (in the TC set) [Anne]

Between-Participant Analysis
Meaning Units
III. Lived Experience of Tai Chi Practice – Four Types of Detachment

Paraphrases	Meaning Units
Mental Detachment	
• With concentration (on TC) comes a detachment from other things that might have been crowding your mind before you got to the tc class [Sally]	A detachment from some or all thoughts (ranges from not thinking about problems, pain, things I have to do, to, my mind goes blank)
• Your problems are forgotten [Ben]	
• My mind doesn't think about anything [Ben]	
• I'm not thinking of the problems around me, when I do my TC [Shirley]	
• I'm not thinking about...anything [Shirley]	
• You're not thinking about (what you have to do) [Cathy]	
• your mind just seems to detach [Anne]	
• When the timelessness bubble appears, nothing (goes through my mind) [Anne]	
• you sorta go blank [Anne]	
• Sometimes (your mind) is almost blank. [RA]	
• Concentrating on TC sorta blocks out a lot of other noises going on, in your mind [Stan]	
Environmental Detachment	
• I'm not too terribly aware of everyone else in the class, except my teacher, when I'm doing (TC) [C]	People and sounds around you move off into the background or disappear, I can visualize myself in a different place
• With concentration (on TC) comes a detachment from the immediate environment [Sally]	
• I can do the (TC) set and I lose the room - move into that meditative or spiritual space [Sally]	

• I think I'm pretty tuned in to the real world, the room, the people, the clock and so on, so I never quite lose my, my sense of attachment to those things [Sally] • I'm not thinking about the people around me [Shirley] • I don't think about anybody, in fact I don't even see anybody [Ben] • Everything else just disappears [Ben] • You're not thinking about...what's happening outside the classroom [Cathy] • It's almost as if you're in a bubble – there's nothing else around you [Anne] • That's the same, shutting out of the world, the same bubble feeling that I get when I meditate – it's just that I happen to be moving when it happens at tc [Anne] • You're not as aware of (people and sounds around you) as you normally would be but you can still pick (them) up [RA]	
Physical Detachment • You lose the sensation of the overt physical act (of doing TC) [C] • If I'm not in (as much) pain then I'll just detach from it and you know, detach from my body [Anne]	You lose the overt physical sensation (of your body)
Altered Perception of Time • Time Seems to Not Exist - I lose time [Ben] • It's a timelessness feeling [Anne] • I'll just get through a set and suddenly say 'I've finished it?' - you lose track of time [Anne]	It's a timelessness feeling - I lose track of time

Between-Participant Analysis
Meaning Units
IV. Perceived Outcomes of Tai Chi Practice

Paraphrases	**Meaning Units**
Physical	
• TC's good if you've go aches and pains, sore back or whatever [Ben]	TC is good to ease pain (especially related to arthritis)
• I went to tc – (my elbow) felt better, and then I practised a little bit and it felt better yet [Ben]	
• I had sciatica in my back - somehow or another I practised enough (TC) that I guess it worked itself loose [Ben]	
• Once we (get) into the (TC) routine, it does help (the arthritis in my knees and my lower back as far as pain) [Shirley]	
• I haven't taken anything for my arthritis for the last at least 5 1/2 years [Cathy]	
• (TC) allows me to move and at the same time detach from the pain that I feel, from the OA [Anne]	
• The more I did (the TC exercises), the less pain I had [Anne]	
• When we did finish TC, the pain was at a bearable level [Anne]	
• If I hadn't been doing tc, I would probably be walking with a cane right now because of the OA in my hip, and in my back [Anne]	
• (The arthritis pain) eases right up, sometimes it goes entirely away by the time I'm through the class [RA]	
• I don't have as much soreness [Stan]	
• The arthritis isn't as severe - (TC) keeps it under control [Stan]	
• Once we (get) into the (TC) routine, it does help (the arthritis in my knees and my lower back as far as flexibility) [Shirley]	TC helps my flexibility - loosens everything up

• (Arthritis symptoms) gradually go away - and then I can start bending a little bit more [Shirley] • TC has kept me limber, flexible [Anne] • (TC) loosens everything up [RA] • After the (tc) set, we do the final bow, I can quite often see a difference there, you know, depending on how bad it was to start, maybe I can gain maybe another inch, just by loosening everything up [RA] • I think (TC) helps my flexibility [Stan]	
• I notice benefit in my muscles - TC's good for muscle toning [Sally] • TC) builds up leg strength in the muscles in your knees, around your knee joint – it's an extension of rehab [RA] • My muscles are firmer - I think they're toned up more [Stan] • I think TC helps my general mobility [Stan] • Improved (physical) function (climbing stairs, getting in/out of chairs, cars, walking longer, less soreness, move faster) [Stan]	**TC is good for building up muscle strength and tone**
• Another thing that came out of (TC) was balance (outdoors) [RA] • Even after the first while I began to have more confidence in, you know in, the kind of a reaction you would have if you slipped [RA] • I think (TC) helps my balance [Stan]	**TC helps my balance and balance confidence**

• (TC) moves the energy (chi) around in your body – this creates good circulation [C] • I notice benefit in my circulation - TC's good for increasing vascular capacity [Sally] • My blood pressure is fine [Cathy] • My heartbeat has hit a very high level, but it goes back to normal very quickly [Anne] • I think (TC) helps my circulation [Stan] • I think that it helps keep my blood pressure under control [Stan] • Your heart rate goes up [Stan] • You're not as inclined to have cold hands and feet [Stan] • You're not as inclined to feel sluggish or have slight headaches [Stan]	TC helps my circulation
• In tc you can breathe deeply, profoundly, at least once per session [C] • I have far better lung capacity than I had before [Anne]	TC helps my respiration
• I'll get depressed now and then you know, but it's nothing like before that I had to go on pills - I am not on any medication (for depression or anxiety currently) [Shirley] • I am not on any medication (for depression or anxiety currently) [Shirley] • I had diverticulitis - I don't have any trouble with my bowels (now) [Cathy] • After (TC), I got rid of my medications [Cathy] • I haven't taken anything for my arthritis for the last at least 5 1/2 years [Cathy] • I'm taking half and sometimes less than half (the medication) the dr. prescribes for me [Cathy]	TC keeps my medical conditions under control

• The diverticulosis has sort of calmed down [Anne] • I haven't had one of those bad migraines (where I've had to go to the hospital for Demerol) for a year and a half now, almost 2 years [Anne] • The arthritis isn't as severe - (TC) keeps it under control [Stan] • I think that it (TC) helps keep my blood pressure under control - I've actually got it better under control now than I've had for 25 years [Stan]	
• There's a physical form of energy that is in a better state, because of the tc [Sally] • You have more energy [Sally] • I notice benefit in my tolerance for climbing stairs and other graded (surfaces) - Surprised myself one day by being able to walk up all the wooden stairs from the parking lot beside Grierson Hill [Sally] • I have a lot of energy - I can do everything now. Before, I would be so tired without doing anything [Cathy] • I have a lot more stamina than I used to have, even though I was more physically active before [Anne] • I have a lot more stay-with-it power just to carry on day to day (e.g. Running up and down stairs, walking the dog, general housework, gardening) [Anne] • [I notice] improved (physical) function - climbing stairs, getting in/out of chairs, cars, walking longer, less soreness, move faster [Stan]	I have a lot more energy and stamina
• I notice benefit in my tolerance for climbing stairs and other graded (surfaces) - Surprised myself one day by being able to walk up all the wooden stairs from the parking lot beside Grierson Hill [Sally] • I have a lot more stay-with-it power just to carry on day to day (e.g. Running up and down stairs, walking the dog, general housework, gardening) [Anne]	I notice improvement in day to day function

- Even after the first while I began to have more confidence in, you know in, the kind of a reaction you would have if you slipped (while walking on ice) - I notice that now if I make a mistake in footing and I start to slip I recover, before I go down [RA]
- [I notice] improved (physical) function - climbing stairs, getting in/out of chairs, cars, walking longer, less soreness, move faster [Stan]

Mental

- I can remember things more clearly than I might have if I were not doing (TC) [C]
- It's just more pleasing to be able to have more facts at your fingertips [C]
- When I learn tc I sort of anticipate, sometimes, which move comes next, all the while trying to concentrate on the move I'm doing, and this same thing seems to be occurring in driving a route [C]
- (TC) has improved my concentration skills [C]
- I can concentrate better [Shirley]
- I find that (TC) helps, with my memory – it's one of those things that exercises your brain [Anne]
- I've tuned a portion of my brain to accept anything that has to be done in sequence, which is kinda neat [e.g. computer operations] [Anne]

TC has improved my memory and concentration

- TC helps the difficult symptoms (of menopause) - worrying excessively, crying out of the blue, feeling depressed, sleeplessness [C]
- (TC) moves the energy (chi) around in your body – this creates good circulation and adequate respiration and an alignment of all of the organs of the body, and consequent emotional balance [C]

TC helps my mood

• The sense of just having a more even balance of energy within my body is there [Sally] • The TC set just enhances feeling centered, grounded [Sally] • You want to feel, put together well, when you're finished. TC does that [Sally] • (TC) has helped depression [Shirley] • Tai Chi has helped me come out of my shell [Shirley] • I'll get depressed now and then you know, but it's nothing like before that I had to go on pills - I am not on any medication (for depression or anxiety currently) [Shirley] • I don't get uptight and angry so much and it (the anger) doesn't last [RA] • I don't get out of control like I used to [RA]	
• TC I think has a leveling, calming effect [C] • A sense of peace (is there) [Sally] • Everything feels more relaxed [Sally] • When I do TC it relaxes me [Ben] • Before I took TC I was always tense, never relaxed - once we start taking tc, that feeling kinda slowly fade(d) away [Ben] • When you relax you don't think about anything so stress is gone [Ben] • Tai Chi has helped me to relax and come out of my shell [Shirley] • At the end of a set, I usually feel relaxed, and tired [Anne] • Whether it's short term or long term (TC) does tend to relax me, mentally – it's a trigger to relax me when I'm in a semi-stressful situation [Anne] • I think I'm more relaxed, all the time [RA]	TC has helped me to relax

• Generally I feel more relaxed around people than I did before [RA] • I find (TC) relaxing [mental/emotional] [Stan]	
• After an hour's worth of TC, I know that I feel more centered and rejuvenated [Sally] • I've often felt refreshed (after TC) [Stan]	I feel refreshed and rejuvenated after TC
• (TC) helps us transcend everyday concerns, struggles or dilemmas [C] • (TC) seem(s) to be a way of lessening the pain of disappointment and concern [C] • Before I practised (meditation) or tc...I would react without consideration more often [C] • With tc, it's a more meditative approach to life and you can consider what the aggravating comment or the act is (before you react) [C] • When (I've) done a TC set my problems are not quite as burdensome - I can come in with a number of things on my mind. But I do find, that over even the first half of the 2 hours (of TC practise) I let go of those fairly quickly [Sally] • If there is an 'issue' you may gain some insight [Sally] • Sometimes if I have lots on my mind, if you're worrying about something, when I do practise TC, that seems to disappear - your problems are forgotten - Troubles and that, like we're having now in the world, they have that won't even fizz on me when I'm doing this (TC) [overlap with LE] [Ben] • (TC) rids my body of the daily grind and troubles of the day [Ben] • I'm not thinking of the problems around me, when I do my tc [Shirley] • I don't think how I could cope with a sick husband if I didn't have TC [Cathy]	TC is part of my stress-coping strategies/stressful situations don't bother me as much

• The meditation aspect of the tc plus my meditation has lessened all the stress [Anne] • (TC) is a trigger to relax me when I'm in a semi-stressful situation [Anne] • TC is part of my coping strategies - (has) allowed me to get in touch with myself and that self is very stress resistant [Anne] • When I'm in a stressful situation, I can sort of stop for a minute, take a deep breath, and say, 'this is not going to bother me as much as it would have' [Anne] • I don't get stressed out if I have to sit and wait (for an appointment now). I can sit there and I can do a (mental) tc set, and that will lead on to other things, you know, what, what's been stressing me lately, 'ok that's not important this is important maybe I'd better think about this one' [Anne] • TC is a Great Distraction - blocks out other noises going on in your mind [Stan]	
• Doing TC helped to raise some emotional things and bring things into focus that I might have otherwise have just held and buried underneath [Sally] • TC will bring out emotions in people - All the stuff that you have stored inside, all your resentment, it comes out – TC brings it to the surface and people learn to deal with it [Cathy]	TC brings emotions to the surface
• TC makes you decisive and strong [C] • (TC) provided me with a better foundation of self-confidence [Sally] • You bring your self-confidence back into line [Sally] • I have a little bit more confidence, in myself [Shirley] • I'm not that nervous person that I used to be [Shirley] • I can speak in front of people [Shirley]	Doing TC has provided me with more self-confidence

Spiritual

- TC has provided one component of strengthening the connection with my spiritual self [Sally]
- I see TC as a facilitator, a part of what helped me, rather than thinking of a god in the framework of Christian doctrine, to think more in terms of a spiritual presence and a spiritual presence within the individual, that transcends those doctrines [Sally]
- TC has contributed to who I am and how I view my fellow man and the world [Sally]
- I think you get a lot of spiritual benefits out of tc (let go of resentments, compassion is the main thing) [Cathy]
- I had a lot of resentment from things that had happened way way back - that's all past, forget about it, just try, try to be different person [Cathy]
- Things that were important, are not important anymore - What other people think of me doesn't bother me anymore, I used to be hard on myself and critical, Money, is not that important anymore [Cathy]
- Compassion has become my main priority - Helping other people, especially the people that are less fortunate and can't move as well as I do, the poor people [Cathy]
- I have learned to Connect Mind Spirit and Body and to connect with the outer world [Cathy]
- TC is a gentle way of leading me into myself to find out what I believe [Anne]
- I think tc it puts you in touch with yourself, as a practise. When you do a physical exercise that requires that you, pay attention to yourself and what your body is doing, it also makes you pay attention to what your mind is thinking. And that can lead you, in, further into a spiritual quest – at least it did for me [Anne]
- For people who are searching I think it (tc) can lead them, into a further study – not necessarily of Buddhism or Taoism, but into their own spirituality [Anne]

TC has helped to strengthen my connection with my spiritual self

- (TC) has led me into the search of other religions [Anne]
- I have a casual feeling about the whole relation ship between man and religion. [RA]
- The stress is off everything, so, um, I like to believe there's something after life, but I don't set up a set rule for myself that if I don't do this then I have to do that, if I don't then I'm going to lose the benefit of this afterlife. That's kinda gone now [RA]
- It's (a) one day at a time kind of thing - don't dwell on what's gonna happen after you leave this life - I'm like 'who cares' [RA]

Appendix J

Uniquely-Occurring Paraphrases

Unique Paraphrases
I. Motivation for Initiation of Tai Chi Practice

Paraphrases

C

1. I've been rather enchanted with the East - (that maybe drew me to TC)
2. I saw myself with a widow's hump, you know, and a broken bone, and a wheelchair, and nursing home, and I thought, 'Not me!'
3. I decided that tc might help me see my way through (the challenges of menopause, teaching, and raising a family)
4. I started out doing tc accepting that something good might come from it

Sally

1. (I liked) the music
2. The interest in (TC) never died - I really wanted to get back to doing some of that (motivation to return to TC)

Ben

1. I had always wanted to take martial arts
2. The doctor said (to my wife) 'take this TC'
3. The fee was pretty good

Unique Paraphrases
II. Motivation for Continuation of Tai Chi Practice

Paraphrases

C

1. Here it's the same people, more or less, you have a sense of continuity
2. My energy isn't depleted by doing other things (now I'm retired) [C]
3. It's an aesthetic experience - If there's a beautiful place, I seem to have the need to do TC there
4. I don't do the (TC) Sword well with any other group
5. I go in honour of my teachers

Sally

1. (TC is) just so important to my week, that I will accommodate it
1. Ben
2. I found, for myself that if I come home and I practised the (TC) moves that we learned that day, it was more beneficial than if I didn't practise them
3. I didn't want to miss these (TC) classes, because to miss these classes I'd be behind
4. I like going (to do TC)
5. It was very interesting
6. There was a totally different thing to do tc with, ok, so that kept me interested and I kept going
7. We liked the music that went along with (TC) it totally relaxes you - the music and the moves went hand in hand

Anne

1. This has become an escape for me [Anne]
2. TC has become a part of me - something is missing from my day until I do it
1. RA
1. I had some idea of accomplishment
2. I can, do it with, a certain amount of flowing
3. My wife started to take (TC) with me; having her do something with you that she really enjoys is a real plus
4. I thought ‘well, it’s gonna be good for my health’ (in first year)

Stan

1. Coming at noon hour has given me a real positive boost
2. I don’t particularly like to exercise in the evenings before I go to bed
3. We realized that, we could likely cope with it
4. You want to be able to complete the training
5. I don’t usually like to start something and then give it up, without giving it a fair shot
6. I think TC is far better than riding a stationary bike, in terms of maintaining interest
1. The more we got into TC the more we liked it

Unique Paraphrases
III. Perceived Outcomes of Tai Chi Practice

Paraphrases

C

1. Part of the beauty of tc is that...you kind of achieve the means and the ends simultaneously (i.e. the outcome is inseparable from the experience of TC)
2. There is the social component – an offer of fellowship
3. (TC’s) an offer of routine
4. If (TC) helps you to control your urges to eat or your urges to indulge in self-pity or your urges to verbally lash out then it’s of enormous value [C]
5. I just don’t withdraw from challenging situations as much as I used to
6. I don’t mind stating my opinion when before, I might have just let things slide
7. Doing tc seems to help you make observations about yourself
8. (TC) helps you make decisions and keep them more solidly than you would if you weren’t doing it
9. I can do TC to deal with some of my own aggressive feelings
10. (TC) is actually self-defense, but not self-defense in an aggressive way, more in an internal building way
11. If you can control your movements you can control your thoughts
12. TC helps you more fully appreciate life
13. TC helps me to get more from (nature)
14. You will find life more pleasant, and you will have more to give of quality

Sally

1. Muscles are released because you’ve been holding them and you know there’s some emotional holding there and the act of physical exercise helps to release some of that
2. (TC) opened me to look at the whole person and the various ways in which we try to remain balanced and healthy [sally]

Shirley

1. Hopefully (if I) continue the TC that would help strengthen the bones [Shirley]

Cathy

1. I feel a lot better, healthier, stronger, a lot younger than I did 10 years ago
2. (My husband) said 'well, you look so much better I'm going to try TC too' [verification by outside source] [Cathy]

Anne

1. (TC's) a way of becoming familiar with my body – it's just enhanced that feeling of proprioception, knowing where your body is in space
2. When there is something wrong with my body, I'm more aware of it
3. (Doing a mental TC set is) also good at night when you're trying to get to sleep if you can't get to sleep – It's better than counting sheep! [Anne]

RA

7. If you do enough of this (TC) stuff you, you start noticing other people (move) too [RA]

Unique Paraphrases
IV. Lived Experience of Tai Chi Practice

Paraphrases

C

1. It's like watching a moving fortress
2. If I'm distracted or thinking about other things I (don't) remember the routine
3. if you're in a group of people you just fit right back in but if you're alone, you have to start all over again
4. I can be thrown off and distracted by someone coming into the room during a round, or by the proximity of someone
5. With TC, your hands, mind and the sword become one unit
6. TC is so physically active (in contrast to sitting meditation, which is) absolutely motionless, and all of the attention focuses inward.
7. Doing (TC) is an aesthetic experience that is enhanced by the addition of a natural element
8. I'm a part of the geography of the group
9. I like to do [tc, sword] outside in natural surroundings, or when the sun's shining through the window and everything is quiet
10. I found the places along the lake, under the trees, where I can do the Sword, outside(in) the mottled sun, and that was an aesthetic experience
11. TC's a way of seeing what is around you and seeing yourself in relation to that surrounding
12. I'm not so sure you can separate aesthetics and spirituality - Just experiencing the (TC) movements (in a natural environment) would be (like) the service of a church

Ben

1. Then I picture myself 'on' - Refresh in my mind the beginning of each move
2. Whenever I do tc, visualization for me to relax, comes naturally
3. Sometimes if I visualize, too strongly, I lose my place in the moves

4. I can visualize the stream with the leaves falling into it, the smell of fall, you know, dead leaves if that, particular thing
5. Another one would be, desert. I can feel the heat, I can feel the sand in my toes eh, when I'm doin' these (TC) moves
6. I visualize doing the tc moves when sitting in a chair sometimes

Cathy

1. I quite often think about (my TC master)
2. That (peripheral view) doesn't take away from your meditative work, it helps to keep it that way

Anne

1. With the tc you're using your brain to focus on something that's physical within your body
2. I may lose sense of time if I'm doing something intricate (with a paintbrush, or cross-stitch), but it's not going to get rid of my pain, it's probably going to get worse
3. I think if you immerse yourself in anything, it can lead to some introspection or this sort of thought pattern, which you do with tc, but not to the same extent because you're also using your brain to focus on something which is not physical, whereas with the tc you're using your brain to focus on something that's physical within your body

RA

1. I always try to remember all the things (the instructors) tell you (when I'm doing the TC set) [mind]
2. There's always 2 or 3 moves that I'm not satisfied with and I'm working on myself

Stan

1. We can go for an hour on group exercises - doing it at home I rarely go as long as 15 or 20 minutes
2. TC is not as absorbing or as fun as a game

Appendix K

Raw Data From Written Respondents

F68 - Female, 68yo

4yrs TC experience, 3x/week 30-60min.

1. How did you get started with Tai Chi? I was a nursing unit manager at the ___ hospital. The hospital and health care system was undergoing great change. The personnel dept. Realizing the stressful situation within the hospital brought in an instructor to teach the managers Tai Chi Chi as a method of stress relief. I really enjoyed it. I have since retired from nursing and about 4 yrs. ago while visiting at the __[hospital] I walked into the West Edmonton Sr. Centre and discovered that ___ [TC instructor's name] was to instruct classes in Tai Chi Chuan. My interest in this Chinese artistic form of exercise was re-ignited.
2. What is it about Tai Chi that helps you to keep up with regular practise, even when you are busy? I am intent on learning this ancient Chinese art form. I feel good when I have learned new moves and postured. It is not a simple routine, it involves the mind and the body. Unless you practise and keep trying each new move and posture you will feel awkward and clumsy in the next class. Although you might be practising the move incorrectly at home, your body movement becomes more fluid, your balance and coordination improves and it is easy to correct at the next class.
3. How would you describe Tai Chi to someone who had never seen it before? Tai Chi is art in motion. A slow even tempo of movements in turns and circles. It is a fluid, continuous process of moving your arms, legs and body, in concert. Tai Chi involves the mind as well because each move and posture must be learned in sequence, each leading to the next. To me, it is more beautiful than ballet.
4. What does it feel like to play Tai Chi? (How does your body feel, what is in your mind) It feels wonderful. When I practise Tai Chi my mind is calm and peaceful. My arms feel light as though floating in space, My feet are rooted, my body is in balance.
5. What kind of effects do you believe Tai Chi has had on you? (physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, etc) Physically: My balance, coordination and strength has improved. Mentally: I feel serene when I practise Tai Chi my mind is at peace. Emotionally: I feel happy. Spiritually: I feel one with nature. (I like to face a window or practise outside. We spend our winters in Arizona so this is possible).
6. Have you experienced any unexpected effects of Tai Chi? I am always surprise at how good it makes me feel.

LF – Female, 60yo

1. How did you get started with Tai Chi? I started in Tai Chi because it was available at West Edmonton Seniors. I gad been tempted to try it before but saw classes advertised as 2 h in length. I didn't feel I was in good enough shape for that nor did I know if I'd like it enough to do it for 2h. Various articles I'd read piqued my interest and I needed exercise.
2. What is it about Tai Chi that helps you to keep up with regular practise, even when you are busy? The relaxation effect is a strong drawing card. I love to feel the muscles stretching out. I become aware of how taut the muscles have become without being noticed. It takes my mind away from everyday stressors and I feel like I'm being good to myself.
3. How would you describe Tai Chi to someone who had never seen it before? I would describe it as ballet-like for the un-talented. The movements are gentle and smooth and continuous. It is suitable of a very wide range of fitness levels. It provides a challenge for the wide ranges as well.
4. What does it feel like to play Tai Chi? (How does your body feel, what is in your mind) It is necessary to pull your mind into focus to perform well. When I start I smile inwardly to see if I can keep my concentration. There is an internal critique that goes on so that movements well done are very satisfying. Rough parts are noted as needing improvement. My body feels nurtured, cared for. I sense myself growing taller. I enjoy the sense of moving gracefully and smoothly. Along with the relaxation there is a quality of being energized. Kinks, are stretched out and trials of life are less formidable.
5. What kind of effects do you believe Tai Chi has had on you? (physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, etc) At first I was quite frustrated learning the movements. I'd lose whole sections of what to do next. Even having learned the first few movements I was aware of a lovely stretch in my mid-section. I had had no idea that those muscles were normally very contracted. Improved blood circulation became evident and I was walking more up-right with a spring in my step. At times I felt I didn't have the time to spend on it and them I realized that 20 min of practise gave me 20 min of energy to put elsewhere. After doing the classes for the first year, I recognized my increased flexibility was not only in my body. I was struggling with clinical depression and the Tai Chi assisted in building emotional and mental strength and flexibility as well. This translates also into a spiritual sphere. I find more joy and peace in nature. I have deepened my love of gardening. I can get 'lost' in pottery and looking at rocks.
6. Have you experienced any unexpected effects of Tai Chi? Much of #5 are unexpected effects. I wanted some exercise and Tai Chi seemed much more appealing than going to a gym. Woman against machine in a gym seems like war, based in anger & aggression. I didn't want that. Being kind and gentle and nurturing my body was what was needed to heal body and mind. It is set up to aim for personal best rather than competition.

I am surprised in analyzing to write this that the Tai Chi dove-tailed so well with so many other efforts I was making to recover from depression and adapt to retirement.

I am surprised at how good it feels to do 10 or 20 min first thing in the morning to wake my body up. Done at night, the stresses and strains of the day melt away. I smile and feel like I can handle whatever is coming. Faced with difficulties I try to move them with grace and flexibility as my body has shown it can do.

MH – Female, 64yo

7yrs TC experience, 90 min. 2x/week

1. How did you get started with Tai Chi? Saw a demo at the fringe. Found the closest group in the phone book and enrolled in beginners
2. What is it about Tai Chi that helps you to keep up with regular practise, even when you are busy?/How has Tai Chi kept your interest, even after learning a set several times? I know how good it makes me feel no matter how tired I am. Busy or not I know I need to do it to keep as healthy as I am. Tai Chi keeps me interested because you never stop learning.
3. How would you describe Tai Chi to someone who had never seen it before? A soft marshall arts – slow stretching and strength building (legs). More stability on your feet
4. What does it feel like to play Tai Chi? (How does your body feel, what is in your mind) Very relaxing but at the same time boosts heart rate and makes your circulation flow better. Sometimes I get lost in the movements and forget where I am in set. Almost like a meditation.
5. What kind of effects do you believe Tai Chi has had on you? (physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, etc)/ What difference has Tai Chi made in your life, compared to before you started practicing it? More agile, less problems with my lower, far better circulation to feet and hands (don't get as cold as they used to). Can always work out a muscle spasm or strain with Tai Chi. Not as many trips to the chiropractor. Tai Chi has had a calming effect. No spiritual effect noted as I am a practising Christian.
6. Have you experienced any unexpected effects of Tai Chi? Not unexpected effects.

KH, Male 64yo

7yrs TC experience, 90 min. 2 days/week

1. How did you get started with Tai Chi? First exposure to Tai Chi was at the Fringe Festival about 8 years ago – outdoors. Phoned to see about getting started after seeing the demo.
2. What is it about Tai Chi that helps you to keep up with regular practise, even when you are busy?/How has Tai Chi kept your interest, even after learning a set several times? I am not the best practiser but can get right back to it after a layoff. The feeling after doing a set particularly well a great feeling.
3. How would you describe Tai Chi to someone who had never seen it before? Healthy exercise.
4. What does it feel like to play Tai Chi? (How does your body feel, what is in your mind) It is both relaxing and stimulating.
5. What kind of effects do you believe Tai Chi has had on you? (physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, etc)/ What difference has Tai Chi made in your life, compared to before you started practicing it? I feel that [it] has has kept muscle tone and kept the mind active. Certainly feel better physically and mentally
6. Have you experienced any unexpected effects of Tai Chi? Just a general healthy feeling.

Thank you Tai Chi

JS – Female, 63yo

12 yrs TC experience, 60-90min 2x/week

1. How did you get started with Tai Chi? My first exposure to Tai Chi was in 1987 or 88 when I saw a demo at the Edmonton Fringe Festival. I began Tai Chi with my husband and a friend. She wanted to try it and didn't want to go alone. We learned the set in two months, and then we went cross-country skiing for first time of the season. We put in 25 klms without hurting the next day and could only attribute it to the Tai Chi as a good warm-up
2. What is it about Tai Chi that helps you to keep up with regular practise, even when you are busy?/How has Tai Chi kept your interest, even after learning a set several times? It is the release of tension, and the maintenance of flexibility of muscles, tendons, and ligaments that keeps me doing Tai Chi either in class or at home. I always get a better work-out at class! As with anything else, there is always room to improve - one can always stretch a little more, use better footwork, strengthen the muscles more, meditate more, smile more, and so on. I believe that the longer one does Tai Chi, the more internal it becomes, the entire body responds and the set becomes one flowing move rather than 108 moves in the right direction.
3. How would you describe Tai Chi to someone who had never seen it before? I would describe Tai Chi as looking deceptively simple on the surface, as a walking meditation, and as a martial art in slow motion.
4. What does it feel like to play Tai Chi? (How does your body feel, what is in your mind) Frequently, when I come to Tai Chi, my mind is racing and my body is tense. As I work through the exercises, I become aware of the tensions and then can consciously "let-go". Then I can concentrate on relaxing those muscles. Sometimes, I have trouble concentrating on the Tai Chi rather than everything else that is going on in my world, but I always feel better, lighter, more relaxed when I leave than when I came.
5. What kind of effects do you believe Tai Chi has had on you? (physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, etc)/ What difference has Tai Chi made in your life, compared to before you started practicing it? I have always been quite physically active so the biggest benefit of the Tai Chi has been to regain the flexibility and balance that I had when I was younger. This has given me more confidence to try skiing, hiking, biking, canoeing and kayaking activities at a more advanced level and for longer periods of time. When I keep up with my Tai Chi, I do not get as stiff and sore from an activity as I would otherwise. And if I do get stiff, then Tai Chi helps to loosen me up again. Physically, I am as flexible again as when I was 20. Mentally, Tai Chi is a challenge to the brain as well as to the body. It also helps to keep the emotions balanced, and provides a congenial group to socialize with. Spiritually, it has given me an insight into the Oriental Philosophy that I might not otherwise have had. Much of it blends nicely with the Christian concepts on which I was raised and still adhere to (do unto others).

    Have you experienced any unexpected effects of Tai Chi? I was most surprised by the good physical effects that Tai Chi has on me.

F71 - Female, 71yo

8yrs TC experience, 20-120 min 7x/week

1. How did you get started with Tai Chi? YMCA class – Why did you get started with TC? Broken femur and onset of arthritis
2. What is it about Tai Chi that helps you to keep up with regular practise, even when you are busy?/How has Tai Chi kept your interest, even after learning a set several times? Commitment and friends. Workshops. Other sets – sword, Lok Hup, Sabre. The body changes as your ability increases – always more to learn. Teaching
3. How would you describe Tai Chi to someone who had never seen it before? Moving meditation – slow and graceful
4. What does it feel like to play Tai Chi? (How does your body feel, what is in your mind) Soothing, smooth and then energizing
5. What kind of effects do you believe Tai Chi has had on you? (physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, etc)/What difference has Tai Chi made in your life, compared to before you started practicing it? More flexibility. More friends. Less pain. The goodwill of the people I teach. Keeping mentally alert and calm.
6. Have you experienced any unexpected effects of Tai Chi? No.

BB - Female, 72yo

14yrs TC experience, 60-90 min 4x/week

1. How did you get started with Tai Chi? Saw ad in Continuing Ed magazine
2. What is it about Tai Chi that helps you to keep up with regular practise, even when you are busy?/How has Tai Chi kept your interest, even after learning a set several times? It has kept my interest because there is always room for improvement. Sociability – looking forward to seeing friends and as an instructor to keep up prctice so I can give my best to my students
3. How would you describe Tai Chi to someone who had never seen it before? A gentle slow series of moves of Chinese origin
4. What does it feel like to play Tai Chi? (How does your body feel, what is in your mind) When I practice Tai Chi my body feels relaxed and challenged at the same time – to start my mind is often occupied with everyday living but as I get into the set a calmness takes over (most times). There are times that I'm working on a move that concentration is the major thing. If I'm not working on a move – "just doing it" everything just "drifts" – less awareness of everything except doing Tai Chi with a group there is an awareness of the entire group working together
5. What kind of effects do you believe Tai Chi has had on you? (physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, etc)/What difference has Tai Chi made in your life, compared to before you started practicing it?
    - More grounded
    - Calmer
    - More empathy
    - More flexibility
    - I'm calmer when driving – not as aggressive and more inclined to give way to others – just more relaxed
    - Calmer in dealing with people and make an effort to be ore understanding
    - After my last heart attack – had little stamina now can handle daily activities and teach an 11/2 hr Tai Chi class
    - I find it is much easier to shoulder check when driving
    - Easier to interact with young grandchildren (e.g.) on the floor
    - Easier to reach awkward space in cupboards
6. Have you experienced any unexpected effects of Tai Chi? No.

Appendix L

Aggregate Data From Written Respondents

Quotes & Meaning Units

Aggregated Written Responses
Quotes & Meaning Units (Includes shared responses only)

Quotes	Meaning Units
I. Motivation for Initiation of TC Practise	
• Saw a demo at the fringe [MH] • First exposure to TC was at the Fringe [KH] • I saw a demo at the Edmonton Fringe Festival [JS]	Saw TC demonstrated at the Fringe
II. Motivation for Continuation of TC Practise	
• I love to feel the muscles stretching out [F68] • I feel like I'm being good to myself [F68] • I know how good it makes me feel [MH] • The feeling after doing a set particularly well is a great feeling [KH]	I know how good TC makes me feel
• Friends [F71] • Sociability – looking forward to seeing friends [BB]	I look forward to seeing friends (at TC)
• I am intent on learning this ancient Chinese art form [LF] • I feel good when I have learned new moves and postures [LF] • TC keeps me interested because you never stop learning and perfecting the moves [MH] • As with anything else, there is always room to improve [JS] • I believe the more one does TC, the more internal it becomes, the entire body responds and the set becomes one flowing move rather than 108 moves in the right direction [JS] • The body changes as your ability increases – always more to learn [F71] • [Attending] workshops, [learning] other sets [F71] • It has kept my interest because there is always room for improvement [BB]	TC keeps me interested because you never stop learning – there is always room for improvement
• Teaching [F71] • Looking forward as an instructor to keep up practise so I can give my best to my students [BB]	Being a TC instructor

III. Lived Experience of TC Practise

• It is necessary to pull your mind into focus to perform well [F68] • There are times that I'm working on a move that concentration is the major thing [BB]	I'm concentrating
• It takes my mind away from everyday stressors...trials of life seem less formidable [F68] • My mind is calm and peaceful [LF] • I feel serene when I practise Tai Chi [LF] • My mind is at peace [LF] • Frequently, when I come to Tai Chi, my mind is racing and my body is tense. As I work through the exercises, I become aware of the tensions and then can consciously 'let go'. Then I can concentrate on relaxing those muscles [JS] • My body feels relaxed and challenged at the same time – to start my mind is often occupied with everyday living but as I get into the set a calmness takes over (most times) [BB] • Along with the relaxation there is a quality of being energized [F68] • I am surprised at how good it feels to do 10 or 20 min. [of TC] first thing in the morning to wake my body up [F68] • Very relaxing but at the same time boosts the heart rate and makes your circulation flow better [MH] • It is both relaxing and stimulating [KH] • Soothing, smooth and then energizing [F71]	TC is both relaxing and stimulating
• Sometimes I get lost in the movements and forget where I am in the set [MH] • Almost like a meditation [MH] • If I'm not working on a move – "just doing it" everything just "drifts" – less awareness of everything except doing Tai Chi – with a group there is an awareness of the entire group working together [F71]	Sometimes I get lost in the [TC] movements - there is less awareness of everything except doing TC
• I sense myself growing taller [F68] • My arms feel light as though floating in space [LF] • My feet are rooted, my body is in balance [LF]	As I work through the [TC] exercises, I become aware of sensations inside my body

• As I work through the [TC] exercises, I become aware of the tensions (in my body) and then can consciously 'let go'. Then I can concentrate on relaxing those muscles [JS]	
IV. Perceived Outcomes of TC Practise	
Physical	
• Increased flexibility [F68] • More agile [MH] • Physically, I am as flexible again as I was when I was 20 [JS] • More flexibility [F71] • More flexibility [BB] • I find it is much easier to shoulder check when driving [BB] • Easier to interact with young grandchildren (e.g., on the floor) [BB] • Easier to reach awkward space in cupboards [BB]	I am more flexible
• Less problems with my lower back [MH] • Can always work out a muscle spasm or strain with Tai Chi [MH] • Not as many trips to the chiropractor [MH] • I do not get as stiff and sore from an activity as I would otherwise [JS] • If I do get stiff, then Tai Chi helps to loosen me up again [JS] • Less pain [F71]	Less pain and soreness
• Improved blood circulation [F68] • Far better circulation to feet and hands (don't get as cold as they used to) [MH]	Improved blood circulation
• My balance [LF] • The biggest benefit if the Tai Chi has been to regain the flexibility and balance that I had when I was younger [JS]	TC has improved my balance
Psychological & Spiritual	
• I was struggling with clinical depression and the Tai Chi assisted in building mental strength and flexibility [F68] • The stresses and strains of the day melt away [F68] • I feel happy [LF]	[TC] helps to keep the emotions balanced

• [TC] helps to keep the emotions balanced [JS]	
• TC has had a calming effect [MH] • Keeping calm [F71] • More grounded [BB] • Calmer – I'm calmer when driving – not so aggressive [BB] • Calmer in dealing with people and make an effort to be more understanding [BB]	I am calmer
• I feel that [TC] has kept the mind active [KH] • Mentally, Tai Chi is a challenge to the brain [JS] • Keeping mentally alert [F71]	TC keeps me mentally alert
• I'm surprised at how good it feels [F68] • I am always surprised at good it makes me feel [LF]	TC makes me feel good
• I find more joy and peace in nature [F68] • I have deepened my love of gardening [F68] • I can get 'lost' in pottery and looking at rocks [F68] • I feel one with nature (I like to face a window or practise outside) [LF]	I feel one with nature
Social	
• More friends [F71] • [TC] provides a congenial group to socialize with [BB]	[TC] provides a congenial group to socialize with